

SCIENTIFIC  
AUCTION  
BRIDGE



E. V. SHEPARD



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# SCIENTIFIC AUCTION BRIDGE

A CLEAR EXPOSITION OF THE GAME  
TO AID BOTH THE BEGINNER AND  
THE EXPERIENCED PLAYER, WITH  
EXPLICIT AND EASY RULES FOR  
BIDDING AND PLAYING

BY  
E. V. SHEPARD



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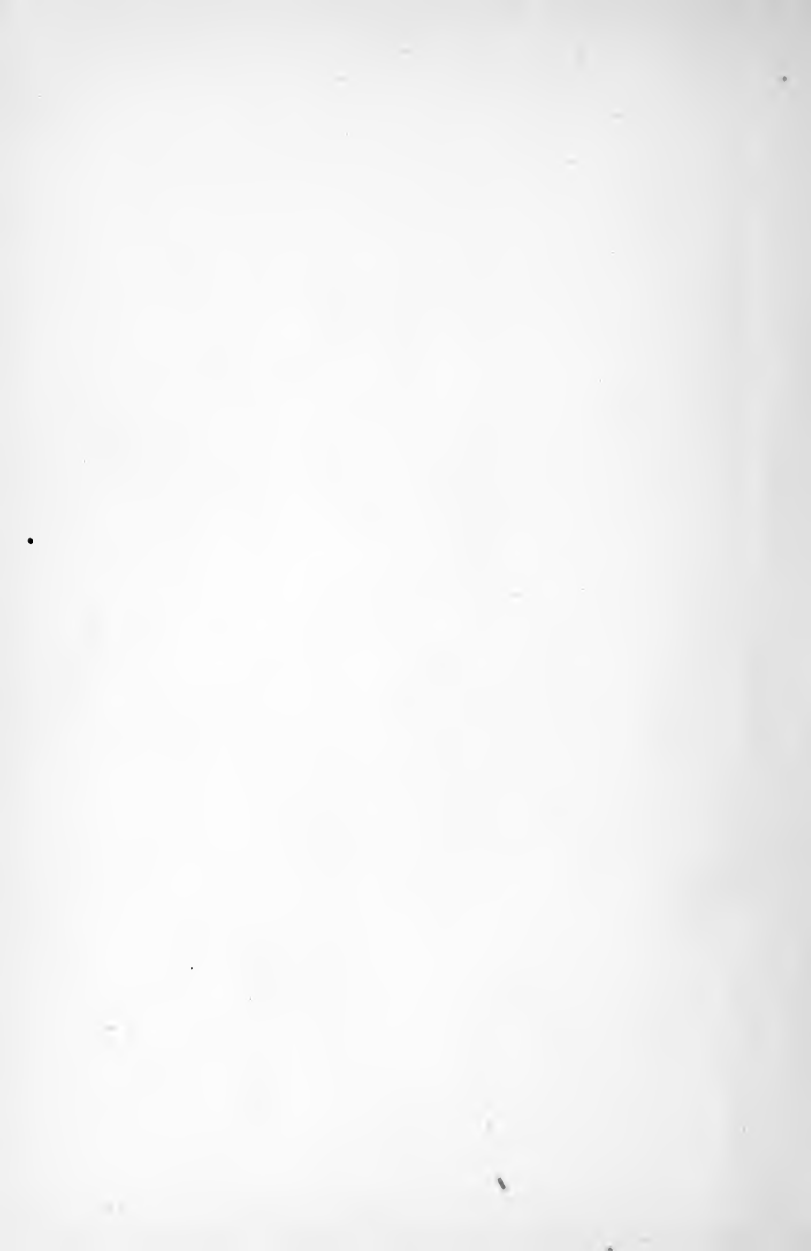
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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
GENERAL REMARKS . . . . .	I
LAWS OF AUCTION BRIDGE . . . . .	3
ETIQUETTE OF AUCTION BRIDGE . . . . .	24
FIRST STEPS . . . . .	26
SIDE FEATURES . . . . .	28
GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AUCTION BRIDGE . . . . .	36
WINNING CARDS . . . . .	41
ATTACKING HANDS . . . . .	48
SCIENTIFIC BIDDING . . . . .	57
INFORMATORY BIDS . . . . .	66
BUSINESS BIDS . . . . .	75
PROTECTIVE BIDS . . . . .	84
SUPPORTING BIDS . . . . .	90
INTERPRETING BIDS . . . . .	96
PASSING . . . . .	111
DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING . . . . .	114
SCORE AND HONOR VALUES . . . . .	125
LEAD TO PARTNER'S STRENGTH . . . . .	129
TRUMP LEADS . . . . .	136
NO-TRUMP LEADS . . . . .	147
CONVENTIONAL PLAYS . . . . .	162
ELDEST HAND . . . . .	180
PONE . . . . .	196
DECLARER . . . . .	215
CARD PROBABILITIES . . . . .	239



SCIENTIFIC  
AUCTION BRIDGE



## GENERAL REMARKS

It is quite unnecessary to know anything of either Whist or Bridge to readily learn to play a good game of Auction Bridge. The three games have much in common, but some of the principles involved are so radically different that a beginner who knows nothing of the older game can about as readily learn what Whist and Bridge players really know of the new game as the latter players can unlearn what does not apply to it.

The closer a player follows the probabilities on sizing up his hand, bidding, doubling, redoubling, leading, and so on, the bigger his score will average. This is the first work on Auction Bridge to enter thoroughly into the mathematical probabilities of the game. Minor changes have resulted in the rules for the play of the cards to give their holder the benefit of increased chances to win. The great changes from methods commonly used by the average player come in the bidding system which is based upon mathematical facts.

A player should start his game with all possible chances in his favor. As the game progresses probabilities give place to disclosures made by others' bids, doubles, redoubles, leads, ruffs, discards, signals, cards played, suits not opened, even by mannerisms of the

players. Disclosures confirm probabilities or show unusual conditions to exist, while probabilities all through the game steady the player who is versed in them and tend to prevent false disclosures from fooling him.

For the benefit of the reader desiring only the main features of the game these have been arranged briefly and simply at the beginning of each chapter under the heading "Chief Essentials." Further particulars will be found in each case headed "Details."

While the system of play outlined here is based upon probabilities, the reader need not bother his head with figures, as simple rules have been evolved from them which will enable him to cope with mathematically inclined players.

LAWS AND ETIQUETTE OF  
AUCTION BRIDGE

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER, 1912

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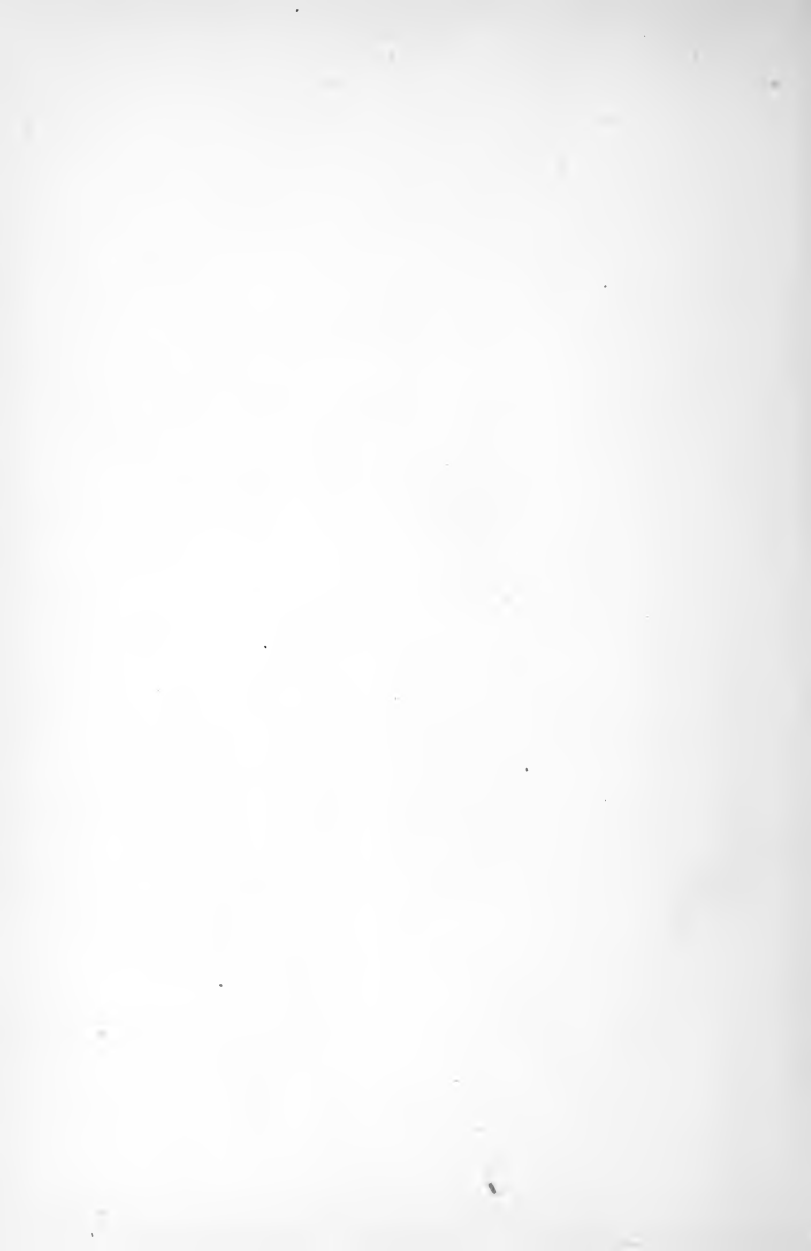
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# CONTENTS

	SECTION
THE RUBBER . . . . .	I
SCORING . . . . .	2 to 13
CUTTING . . . . .	14 to 16
FORMING TABLES . . . . .	17 to 20
CUTTING OUT . . . . .	21
RIGHT OF ENTRY . . . . .	22 to 27
SHUFFLING . . . . .	28 to 30
THE DEAL . . . . .	31 to 36
A NEW DEAL . . . . .	37 to 41
DECLARING TRUMPS . . . . .	42 to 52
DOUBLING, REDOUBLING, ETC. . . . .	53 to 58
DUMMY . . . . .	59 to 64
CARDS EXPOSED BEFORE PLAY . . . . .	65 to 66
CARDS EXPOSED DURING PLAY . . . . .	67 to 75
LEADS OUT OF TURN . . . . .	76 to 79
CARDS PLAYED IN ERROR . . . . .	80 to 82
THE REVOKE . . . . .	83 to 89
GENERAL RULES . . . . .	90 to 94
NEW CARDS . . . . .	95 to 96
BYSTANDERS . . . . .	97
ETIQUETTE . . . . .	<i>Page</i> 24



# THE LAWS OF AUCTION BRIDGE

## THE RUBBER

1. The partners first winning two games win the rubber. If the first two games decide the rubber, a third is not played.

## SCORING

2. A game consists of thirty points obtained by tricks alone, exclusive of any points counted for honors, chicane, slam, little slam, bonus, or under-tricks.

3. Every deal is played out, and any points in excess of the thirty necessary for the game are counted.

4. When the declarer wins the number of tricks bid, each one above six counts toward the game: two points when spades are trumps, six when clubs are trumps, seven when diamonds are trumps, eight when hearts are trumps, nine when royal spades are trumps, and ten when there are no trumps.

5. Honors are ace, king, queen, knave, and ten of the trump suit; or the aces when no trump is declared.

6. Honors are credited in the honor column to the original holders, being valued as follows:

*When a Trump is Declared.*

3 honors held between partners equal value of 2 tricks.

4	"	"	"	"	"	"	4	"		
5	"	"	"	"	"	"	5	"		
4	"	"	in 1 hand			"	"	8	"	
4	"	"	"	I	"	{ 5th in partner's hand }	"	"	9	"
5	"	"	"	I	"		"	"	10	"

*When no Trump is Declared.*

3 aces held between partners count 30

4 " " " " " 40

4 " " in one hand " 100

7. Slam is made when seven by cards is scored by either side, independently of tricks taken as penalty for the revoke; it adds forty points to the honor count.<sup>1</sup>

8. Little slam is made when six by cards is similarly scored; it adds twenty points to the honor count.<sup>1</sup>

9. Chicane (one hand void of trumps) is equal in value to simple honors—*i. e.*, if the partners, one of whom has chicane, score honors, it adds the value of three honors to their honor score; if the adversaries score honors it deducts that value from theirs. Double chicane (both hands void of trumps) is equal in value to four honors, and that value must be deducted from the honor score of the adversaries.

<sup>1</sup>Law 84 prohibits the revoking side from scoring slam or little slam.

10. The value of honors, slam, little slam, or chicane is not affected by doubling or redoubling.

11. At the conclusion of a rubber the trick and honor scores of each side are added, and two hundred and fifty points added to the score of the winners. The difference between the completed scores is the number of points of the rubber.

12. A proven error in the honor score may be corrected at any time before the score of the rubber has been made up and agreed upon.

13. A proven error in the trick score may be corrected prior to the conclusion of the game in which it occurred. Such game shall not be considered concluded until a declaration has been made in the following game, or if it be the final game of the rubber, until the score has been made up and agreed upon.

### CUTTING

14. In cutting, the ace is the lowest card; as between cards of otherwise equal value, the lowest is the heart, next the diamond, next the club, and highest the spade.

15. Every player must cut from the same pack.

16. Should a player expose more than one card, the highest is his cut.

### FORMING TABLES

17. The prior right of playing is with those first in the room. If there are more than four candidates of equal standing, the privilege of playing is decided by cutting. The four who cut the lowest cards play first.

18. After the table is formed the players cut to decide upon partners, the two lower playing against the two higher. The lowest is the dealer, who has choice of cards and seats, and who, having made his selection, must abide by it.

19. Six players constitute a complete table.
20. The right to succeed any player who may retire is acquired by announcing the desire to do so, and such announcement shall constitute a prior right to the first vacancy.

### CUTTING OUT

21. If, at the end of a rubber, admission is claimed by one or two candidates, the player or players having played the greatest number of consecutive rubbers shall withdraw; but when all have played the same number they must cut to decide upon the outgoers; the highest are out.<sup>1</sup>

### RIGHT OF ENTRY

22. A candidate desiring to enter a table must declare his intention before any player at the table cuts a card, whether for the purpose of beginning a new rubber or of cutting out.

23. In the formation of new tables candidates who have not played at any existing table have the prior right of entry. Others decide their right to admission by cutting.

24. When one or more players belonging to an existing table aid in making up a new one he or they shall be the last to cut out.

25. A player who cuts into one table, while belonging to another, forfeits his prior right of re-entry into the latter, unless he has helped to form a new table. In this event he may signify his intention of returning to his original table when his place at the new one can be filled.

26. Should any player leave a table during the progress of a rubber, he may, with the consent of the three

<sup>1</sup> See Law 14 as to value of cards in cutting.

others, appoint a substitute to play during his absence; but such appointment shall become void upon the conclusion of the rubber, and shall not in any way affect the substitute's rights.

27. If any player break up a table the others have a prior right elsewhere.

### SHUFFLING

28. The pack must not be shuffled below the table nor so that the face of any card may be seen.

29. The dealer's partner must collect the cards from the preceding deal and has the right to shuffle first. Each player has the right to shuffle subsequently. The dealer has the right to shuffle last; but, should a card or cards be seen during his shuffling, or while giving the pack to be cut, he must reshuffle.

30. After shuffling, the cards properly collected must be placed face downward to the left of the next dealer, where they must remain untouched until the play with the other pack is finished.

### THE DEAL

31. Each player deals in his turn; the order of dealing is to the left.

32. The player on the dealer's right cuts the pack, and in dividing it he must leave not fewer than four cards in each packet; if in cutting or in replacing one of the two packets a card is exposed, or if there is any confusion or doubt as to the exact place in which the pack was divided, there must be a fresh cut.

33. When the player whose duty it is to cut has once separated the pack, he can neither reshuffle nor recut, except as provided in Law 32.

34. Should the dealer shuffle the cards after the cut, the pack must be cut again.

35. The fifty-two cards shall be dealt face downward. The deal is not completed until the last card has been dealt.

36. In the event of a misdeal the cards must be dealt again by the same player.

#### A NEW DEAL

37. There *must* be a new deal—

- (a) If the cards are not dealt into four packets, one at a time and in regular rotation, beginning at the dealer's left.
- (b) If, during a deal or during the play, the pack is proven incorrect or imperfect.
- (c) If any card is faced in the pack or is exposed during the deal on, above or below the table.
- (d) If any player has dealt to him a greater number of cards than thirteen, whether discovered before or during the play.
- (e) If the dealer deal two cards at once and then deal a third before correcting the error.
- (f) If the dealer omit to have the pack cut and either adversary calls attention to the fact prior to the completion of the deal and before either adversary has looked at any of his cards.
- (g) If the last card does not come in its regular order to the dealer.

38. Should three players have their right number of cards, the fourth, less, and not discover such deficiency until he has played, the deal stands; he, not being dummy, is answerable for any established revoke he may have made as if the missing card or cards had been in his hand. Any player may search the other pack for it or them.

39. If, during the play, a pack be proven incorrect, such proof renders the current deal void, but does not

affect any prior score. [See Law 37 (b).] If during or at the conclusion of the play one player be found to hold more than the proper number of cards and another have an equal number less, the deal is void.

40. A player dealing out of turn or with the adversaries' cards may be corrected before the last card is dealt, otherwise the deal must stand, and the game proceed as if the deal had been correct, the player to his left dealing the next hand. A player who has looked at any of his cards may not correct such deal, nor may his partner.

41. A player can neither cut, shuffle, nor deal for his partner without the permission of his adversaries.

### DECLARING TRUMPS

42. The dealer, having examined his hand, must declare to win at least one odd trick, either with a declared suit or at "no trumps."

43. After the dealer has made his declaration, each player in turn, commencing with the player on the dealer's left, has the right to pass, to make a higher declaration, to double the last declaration made, or to redouble a declaration which has been doubled, subject to the provisions of Law 54.

44. A declaration of a greater number of tricks in a suit of lower value, which equals the last declaration in value of points, shall be considered a higher declaration—*e. g.*, a declaration of "Three Spades" is a higher declaration than "One Club."

45. A player in his turn may overbid the previous adverse declaration any number of times, and may also overbid his partner, but he cannot overbid his own declaration which has been passed by the three others.

46. The player who makes the final declaration shall play the combined hands of himself and his partner

(the latter becoming dummy), unless the winning suit was first bid by the partner, in which case he, no matter what bids have intervened, shall play the hand.

47. When the player of the two hands (hereinafter termed "the declarer") wins at least as many tricks as he declared, he scores the full value of the tricks won (see Laws 4 and 6). When he fails, neither the declarer nor his adversaries score anything toward the game, but his adversaries score in the honor column fifty points for each under-trick—*i. e.*, each trick short of the number declared; or, if the declaration has been doubled, or redoubled, one hundred or two hundred respectively for each such trick.

48. The loss on the original declaration by the dealer of "One Spade" is limited to one hundred points whether doubled or not, unless redoubled. Honors are scored as held.

49. If a player make a declaration (other than passing) out of turn, either adversary may demand a new deal, or may allow the declaration so made to stand, in which case the bidding shall continue as if the declaration had been in order.<sup>1</sup>

50. If a player make an insufficient or impossible declaration, either adversary may demand that it be penalized, provided such demand be made before an adversary has passed, doubled, or declared. In case of an insufficient declaration the penalty is that the declarer must make his bid sufficient and his partner is debarred from making any further declaration unless an adversary subsequently bids or doubles. In case of an impossible declaration the penalty is that the

<sup>1</sup> The Whist Club, Case 1, decision in brief is: There does not seem to be any sound reason for preventing partners entitled to a penalty or choice of penalties from consulting, and as the laws at present stand, there is unquestionably nothing prohibiting it.

declarer is considered to have bid to take all the tricks and his partner cannot further declare unless an adversary subsequently bids or doubles. Either adversary, instead of accepting the impossible declaration, may demand a new deal or may treat his own or his partner's last previous declaration as final.

51. If, after the final declaration has been made, an adversary of the declarer give his partner any information as to any previous declaration, whether made by himself or an adversary, the declarer may call a lead from the adversary whose turn next it is to lead; but a player is entitled to inquire, at any time during the play of the hand, what was the final declaration.

52. A declaration legitimately made cannot be altered after the next player has passed, declared, or doubled. Prior to such action by the next player, a declaration inadvertently made may be corrected.

#### DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING

53. The effect of doubling and redoubling is that the value of each trick over six is doubled or quadrupled, as provided in Law 4; but it does not alter the value of a declaration—*e. g.*, a declaration of "Three Clubs" is higher than "Two Royal Spades" even if the "Royal Spade" declaration has been doubled.

54. Any declaration can be doubled and redoubled once, but not more; a player cannot double his partner's declaration, nor redouble his partner's double, but he may redouble a declaration of his partner which has been doubled by an adversary.

55. The act of doubling or redoubling reopens the bidding. When a declaration has been doubled or redoubled, any player, including the declarer or his partner, can in his proper turn make a further declaration of higher value.

56. When a player whose declaration has been doubled wins the declared number of tricks, he scores a bonus of fifty points in the honor column, and a further fifty points for each additional trick. If he or his partner has redoubled, the bonus is doubled.

57. If a player double out of turn, either adversary may demand a new deal.

58. When the final declaration has been made the play shall begin, and the player on the left of the declarer shall lead.

### DUMMY

59. As soon as the player to the left of the declarer has led, the declarer's partner shall place his cards face upward on the table, and the duty of playing the cards from that hand shall devolve upon the declarer.

60. Before placing his cards upon the table the declarer's partner has all the rights of a player, but after so doing takes no part whatever in the play, except that he has the right:

- (a) To ask the declarer whether he has any of a suit in which he has renounced;
- (b) To call the declarer's attention to the fact that too many or too few cards have been played to a trick;
- (c) To correct the claim of either adversary to a penalty to which the latter is not entitled;
- (d) To call attention to the fact that a trick has been erroneously taken by either side;
- (e) To participate in the discussion of any disputed question of fact after it has arisen between the declarer and either adversary;
- (f) To correct an erroneous score.

61. Should the declarer's partner call attention to any other incident of the play in consequence of which any penalty might have been exacted, the declarer is precluded from exacting such penalty.

62. If the declarer's partner, by touching a card or otherwise, suggest the play of a card from dummy, either adversary may call upon the declarer to play or not play the card suggested.

63. Dummy is not liable to the penalty for a revoke; if he revoke and the error be not discovered until the trick is turned and quitted, whether by the rightful winners or not, the trick must stand.

64. A card from the declarer's own hand is not played until actually quitted; but should he name or touch a card in the dummy, such card is considered as played unless he, in touching the card, say, "I arrange," or words to that effect. If he simultaneously touch two or more such cards, he may elect which one to play.

#### **CARDS EXPOSED BEFORE PLAY**

65. If, after the cards have been dealt, and before the trump declaration has been finally determined, any player lead or expose a card, the partner of the offending player may not make any further bid or double during that hand, and the card is subject to call. When the partner of the offending player is the original leader, the declarer may prohibit the suit of the exposed card being the initial lead.

66. If, after the final declaration has been made and before a card is led, the partner of the leader to the first trick expose a card, the declarer may, in addition to calling the card, prohibit the lead of the suit of the exposed card; should the rightful leader expose a card it is subject to call.

#### **CARDS EXPOSED DURING PLAY**

67. All cards exposed after the original lead by the declarer's adversaries are liable to be called, and such cards must be left face upward on the table.

68. The following are exposed cards:

- 1st. Two or more cards played at once.
- 2d. Any card dropped with its face upward on the table, even though snatched up so quickly that it cannot be named.
- 3d. Any card so held by a player that his partner sees any portion of its face.
- 4th. Any card mentioned by either adversary as being held by him or his partner.

69. A card dropped on the floor or elsewhere below the table or so held that an adversary but not the partner sees it, is not an exposed card.

70. If two or more cards are played at once by either of the declarer's adversaries, the declarer shall have the right to call any one of such cards to the current trick, and the other card or cards are exposed.

71. If, without waiting for his partner to play, either of the declarer's adversaries play or lead a winning card, as against the declarer and dummy, and continue (without waiting for his partner to play) to lead several such cards, the declarer may demand that the partner of the player in fault win, if he can, the first or any other of these tricks, and the other cards thus improperly played are exposed cards.

72. If either or both of the declarer's adversaries throw his or their cards on the table face upward, such cards are exposed and are liable to be called; but if either adversary retain his hand he cannot be forced to abandon it. Cards exposed by the declarer are not liable to be called. If the declarer say, "I have the rest," or any other words indicating that the remaining tricks or any number thereof are his, he may be required to place his cards face upward on the table.

His adversaries are not liable to have any of their cards called should they thereupon expose them.

73. If a player who has rendered himself liable to have the highest or lowest of a suit called (Laws 80, 86, and 92) fail to play as directed, or if, when called on to lead one suit, he lead another, having in his hand one or more cards of the suit demanded (Laws 76 and 93), or if, called upon to win or lose a trick, fail to do so when he can (Laws 71, 80, and 92), or if, when called upon not to play a suit, fail to play as directed (Laws 65 and 66), he is liable to the penalty for revoke, unless such play be corrected before the trick is turned and quitted.

74. A player cannot be compelled to play a card which would oblige him to revoke.

75. The call of an exposed card may be repeated until such card has been played.

#### LEADS OUT OF TURN

76. If either of the declarer's adversaries lead out of turn the declarer may either treat the card so led as an exposed card or may call a suit as soon as it is the turn of either adversary to lead.

77. If the declarer lead out of turn, either from his own hand or from dummy, he incurs no penalty; but he may not rectify the error after the second hand has played.

78. If any player lead out of turn and the three others follow, the trick is complete and the error cannot be rectified; but if only the second, or second and third play to the false lead, their cards may be taken back; there is no penalty against any except the original offender, who, if he be one of the declarer's adversaries, may be penalized as provided in Law 76.

79. If a player called on to lead a suit has none of it, the penalty is paid.

## CARDS PLAYED IN ERROR

80. Should the fourth hand, not being dummy or declarer, play before the second, the latter may be called upon to play his highest or lowest card of the suit played, or to win or lose the trick.

81. If any one, not being dummy, omit playing to a trick and such error is not corrected until he has played to the next, the adversaries or either of them may claim a new deal; should either decide that the deal is to stand, the surplus card at the end of the hand is considered to have been played to the imperfect trick, but does not constitute a revoke therein.

82. When any one except dummy plays two or more cards to the same trick and the mistake is not corrected, he is answerable for any consequent revokes he may have made. When during the play the error is detected, the tricks may be counted face downward, to see if any contain more than four cards; should this be the case, the trick which contains a surplus card or cards may be examined and the card or cards restored to the original holder, who (not being dummy) shall be liable for any revoke he may meanwhile have made.

## THE REVOKE<sup>1</sup>

83. A revoke occurs when a player other than dummy, holding one or more cards of the suit led, plays a card of a different suit. It becomes an established revoke if the trick in which it occurs is turned and quitted by the rightful winners (*i. e.*, the hand removed from the trick after it has been turned face downward on the table); or if either the revoking player or his partner, whether in turn or otherwise, lead or play to the following trick.

<sup>1</sup> See Law 73.

84. The penalty for each established revoke is:

- (a) When the declarer revokes, his adversaries add 150 points to their score in the honor column, in addition to any penalty which he may have incurred for not making good his declaration.
- (b) If either of the adversaries revoke, the declarer may either add 150 points to his score in the honor column, or may take three tricks from his opponents and add them to his own. Such tricks may assist the declarer to make good his declaration, but shall not entitle him to score any bonus in the honor column, in the case of the declaration having been doubled or redoubled.
- (c) When more than one revoke is made by the same side during the play of the hand the penalty for each revoke after the first shall be 100 points in the honor column.

A revoking side cannot score, except for honors or chicane.

85. A player may ask his partner if he has a card of the suit which he has renounced; should the question be asked before the trick is turned and quitted, subsequent turning and quitting does not establish a revoke, and the error may be corrected unless the question is answered in the negative, or unless the revoking player or his partner has led or played to the following trick.

86. If a player correct his mistake in time to save a revoke, any player or players who have followed him may withdraw their cards and substitute others, and the cards so withdrawn are not exposed. If the player in fault is one of the declarer's adversaries, the card played in error is exposed and the declarer may call it whenever he pleases; or he may require the offender to play his highest or lowest card of the suit to the

trick, but this penalty cannot be exacted from the declarer.

87. At the end of a hand the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks. If the cards have been mixed the claim may be urged and proved if possible; but no proof is necessary and the claim is established if, after it has been made, the accused player or his partner mix the cards before they have been sufficiently examined by the adversaries.

88. A revoke must be claimed before the cards have been cut for the following deal.

89. Should both sides revoke, the only score permitted shall be for honors in trumps or chicane. If one side revoke more than once, the penalty of 100 points for each extra revoke shall then be scored by the other side.

#### GENERAL RULES

90. Once a trick is complete, turned and quitted, it must not be looked at (except under Law 82) until the end of the hand.

91. Any player during the play of a trick or after the four cards are played, and before they are touched for the purpose of gathering them together, may demand that the cards be placed before their respective players.

92. If either of the declarer's adversaries, prior to his partner playing, call attention to the trick, either by saying it is his, or without being requested so to do, by naming his card or drawing it toward him, the declarer may require such partner to play his highest or lowest card of the suit led, or to win or lose the trick.

93. Either of the declarer's adversaries may call his partner's attention to the fact that he is about to play or lead out of turn; but if, during the play of a hand, he make any unauthorized reference to any incident

of the play, or of any bid previously made, the declarer may call a suit from the adversary whose turn it is next to lead.

94. In all cases where a penalty has been incurred the offender is bound to give reasonable time for the decision of his adversaries.

### NEW CARDS

95. Unless a pack is imperfect, no player shall have the right to call for one new pack. If fresh cards are demanded, two packs must be furnished. If they are produced during a rubber, the adversaries shall have the choice of the new cards. If it is the beginning of a new rubber, the dealer, whether he or one of his adversaries is the party calling for the new cards, shall have the choice. New cards must be called for before the pack is cut for a new deal.

96. A card or cards torn or marked must be replaced by agreement or new cards furnished.

### BYSTANDERS

97. While a bystander, by agreement among the players, may decide any question, he should not say anything unless appealed to; and if he make any remark which calls attention to an oversight affecting the score, or to the exaction of a penalty, he is liable to be called upon by the players to pay the stakes (not extras) lost.

## ETIQUETTE OF AUCTION BRIDGE

In Auction Bridge slight intimations convey much information. A code is compiled for the purpose of succinctly stating laws and for fixing penalties for an offense. To offend against etiquette is far more serious than to offend against a law; for, while in the latter case the offender is subject to the prescribed penalties, in the former his adversaries have no redress.

1. Declarations should be made in a simple manner, thus: "One Heart," "One No Trump," or "I pass," or "I double"; they should be made orally, and not by gesture.

2. Aside from his legitimate declaration, a player should not give any indication by word or gesture as to the nature of his hand, or as to his pleasure or displeasure at a play, a bid, or a double.

3. If a player demand that the cards be placed, he should do so for his own information, and not to call his partner's attention to any card or play.

4. No player, other than the declarer, should lead until the preceding trick is turned and quitted; nor, after having led a winning card, should he draw another from his hand before his partner has played to the current trick.

5. A player should not play a card with such emphasis as to draw attention to it. Nor should he de-

tach one card from his hand and subsequently play another.

6. A player should not purposely incur a penalty because he is willing to pay it, nor should he make a second revoke to conceal a first.

7. Players should avoid discussion and refrain from talking during the play, as it may be annoying to players at the table or to those at other tables in the room.

8. The dummy should not leave his seat for the purpose of watching his partner's play, neither should he call attention to the score nor to any card or cards that he or the other players hold, nor to any bid previously made.

9. If a player say "I have the rest," or any words indicating the remaining tricks are his, and one or both of the other players should expose his or their cards, or request him to play out the hand, he should not allow any information so obtained to influence his play nor take any finesse not announced by him at the time of making such claim, unless it had been previously proven to be a winner.

10. If a player concede in error one or more tricks, the concession should stand.

11. A player having been cut out of one table should not seek admission into another, unless willing to cut for the privilege of entry.

12. No player should look at any of his cards until the deal is completed.

## FIRST STEPS

Four players are required to play the game of Auction Bridge. Those sitting opposite each other are partners and keep their tricks in common.

Partners can be selected before the game and can be retained, or one player can sit still and two others can change places after each rubber. If you play with each other person in turn, one rubber with each, it is known as pivoting or rotating. The ordinary way to choose partners is by cutting, as provided in the Laws of Auction Bridge.

The dealer shuffles his cards and passes them to the player on his right to cut. In cutting always place the cards you remove toward the dealer. You have no right to join the two packets after separating them. This must be done by the dealer, who then distributes the fifty-two cards of the pack, one at a time, to the players in regular rotation, commencing at his left. The bidding proceeds in the same way from left to right, like the movement of the hands of a clock. The player to whom the first card is dealt will become the dealer for the next hand, and so on in regular rotation until the end of the rubber, when all players must cut to see who shall deal first on the new rubber.

In the Laws of Auction Bridge will be found complete details for bidding, scoring, and those things which are allowable or prohibited.

The player on declarer's left is known as "eldest hand" or "elder"; "dummy," also known as "weak hand," sits next, and is opposite the declarer; the remaining player, who sits at declarer's right, is known as "pone," "youngest hand," or "younger." The declarer's adversaries are collectively called the "side players," and sometimes the declarer is referred to as the "strong hand." The terms "leader" or "first hand," "second hand," "third hand," and "fourth hand" show the order in which the contestants have played to a trick. The "opening lead" is the first card led by elder. An "original lead" is the first card led by any player. The "opening bid" is the dealer's first bid. An "original bid," or "primary bid," is the first bid made by any player.

## **SIDE FEATURES**

Attention to the mechanical setting of the game adds to its pleasure, and should become a habit with all players. Although this topic is intended particularly for beginners, it would make many of the older players more agreeable partners if they would take it to heart. The player who is careless in the arrangement of his cards is the kind of player who needs watching to see that he does not revoke or make other bad mistakes.

### **USE TWO PACKS OF CARDS**

Each side has its own cards. The backs of the two packs should be readily distinguishable—for instance, one red and the other blue—to prevent mixing them. While the dealer is distributing the cards of one pack his partner shuffles the other pack, then places this “still pack” at the left hand of the one who will next deal. It should remain in that place to mark the next dealer.

### **SORT YOUR CARDS**

Upon the completion of the deal each player should at once divide his cards so that all those of a suit will come together. Next, alternate the red and black

suits. Always arrange the suits in the same way. For example, spades next to you, diamonds back of them, followed by clubs, and hearts furthest away from you. The alternation of colors and having only one place for each suit form the best possible safeguards against revoking. Last of all, arrange the cards of each suit in numerical order, with the smallest card nearest to you. This facilitates rapid play and assists in fixing all the cards in your mind. While arranging, and during play, avoid holding your cards so that another player can see them.

### COUNT YOUR CARDS

Before you play a card count the number in each suit, thus: three spades, five diamonds, two clubs, three hearts, thirteen total. This serves a double purpose. It assures you that no misdeal has been made on your own cards; it fixes the number of each suit you originally held in mind. Later in the game a glance at your cards will show the number of times a suit has been led or used for ruffing or discarded from.

### BOARDING DUMMY'S HAND

After the first player, known as eldest hand, has led his first card, dummy's hand goes, face up, on the table, red and black suits alternating, cards of each suit numerically arranged and spread out to give a perfect view of each card. Dummy should always place his trump suit furthest to his right. With "no trumps" the heart suit should be on his right. All the cards should be within easy reach of the declarer,

and the cards played should be boarded between dummy's cards and the declarer.

### KEEPING TRICKS

The declarer collects and keeps the tricks taken by his side. The partner of the one winning the first trick for the adversaries keeps their tricks. The four cards of a trick should always remain together for possible future reference. The tricks should be neatly stacked up in any way easy to count. When six tricks have been taken by the declarer they can be made into a single "book" and set on one side. After that the remaining tricks—or "odd tricks"—can be kept one side for ready counting. The "adversaries' book" consists of 7 tricks less the contract. If the declarer has bid "Three," the adversaries' book will consist of  $7 - 3 = 4$ . The first 4 tricks won can be bunched together as a book, and the remaining undertricks (those penalizing the declarer) kept separate for reference.

### KEEPING SCORE

There are two distinct ways of keeping the score. The first method is less work, as both trick and honor points of a side are added in a single column. The second form possesses the advantage of clearness, since the trick and honor points of a deal can be entered upon the same line for reference.

The scorer always puts his own score in the first column, and in calling off the point score, as should be done after each game, he calls off his own score first.

In this connection, "Love" means 0, thus "Love-All" means a game score 0 to 0.

Suppose Smith and his wife are playing against Mr. and Mrs. Brown: Mr. Smith is keeping the score. He wins the first right to declare, goes no trump, and wins 3 odd tricks, which give him thirty trick points, thus winning the first game. His side has all the aces in the joint hands of declarer and dummy, thus giving 40 honor points. Mrs. Brown gains the second declaration on "Four Clubs," doubled by Mr. Smith. Her side wins 5 odd tricks, with 4 honors in her hand and the fifth in her partner's (technically known as having 9 honors). Her score is 5 club tricks at doubled value, 60 game points; 54 for honors, 50 for contract, and 50 for one overtrick, a total of 154 honor points. From this is deducted chicane, because Mrs. Smith had no clubs, giving a net of 142 honor points. Mrs. Brown gains the contract on the next deal, on a bid of "Two Hearts." She wins only 7 tricks, and loses 50 honor points to her adversaries, but wins "simple honors" (3 honors on her side), worth 16 honor points. The fourth deal results in Mrs. Smith winning the odd at no trumps; this scores her side 10 game points, with "honors easy," since each side holds 2 aces. The fifth deal ends the rubber, with Smith winning 6 odd no-trump tricks, worth 60 game points, and 100 honor points for 4 aces in his own hand, and 20 added for "little slam." His side also takes 250 honor points for the rubber. Forms 1 and 2 show the difference in keeping the score under the two systems. It is customary to draw a line across the sheet after each game to prevent mistakes on game score.

Form 1, where "game score" goes below the line and "honor score" above the line, gave rise to such expressions as "We have nothing below the line," meaning "We have not yet scored toward game."

FORM 1		FORM 2			
		Tricks 30	Honors 40	Tricks	Honors
			12	60	54
					50
					50
250			50		16
120					
50	16	10			
12	50	60	120		
40	50				
	54		250		
30					
	60				
10		100	100	60	60
60					
572	230		572		230
230			230		
342			342		

It is safer to enter each item of the score as is done on the second declaration rather than to lump them as is done on the fifth declaration.

The final difference between the two scores, in this case 342, shows the winnings and losses for the first rubber.

Suppose that our imaginary players exchange partners for the second rubber, which Mr. Smith and Mrs. Brown win by 504 points. The ladies next play together, losing the rubber but coming out 40 points ahead on final score—as not uncommonly occurs. Form 3 shows a common method of keeping their individual scores. The points of the rubber are first entered at the head of the double column. The winning side has “plus” scores, the losing side has “minus” scores. If properly entered, the plus and minus balances must be identical after each rubber.

FORM 3

RUBBERS	1		2		3		4	
POINTS	342		504		40		406	
PLAYERS	Plus	Minus	Plus	Minus	Plus	Minus	Plus	Minus
Mr. Smith	342		846		806		400	
Mrs. Smith	342			162		122	284	
Mr. Brown		342		846		886		480
Mrs. Brown		342	162		202		202	
Miss Brown								406
Balances	684	684	1008	1008	1008	1008	886	886

If Miss Brown replaces her mother on the fourth rubber, plays with Mr. Smith, and loses 406 points, either a new record can be started or her score can be added to the old record, as shown above.

Every player should have practice in keeping the score. Beginners should have at least two scores kept and compared.

When a single score is kept it should be in large figures and remain on the table, so that all the players can conveniently see how the score stands.

## STAKES

If the game is played for a definite amount per point, the individual score shown in Form 3 should be kept in dollars and cents instead of points.

While no stakes are necessary to render the game thoroughly enjoyable to real enthusiasts, many players feel the need of some incentive to keep them from careless or reckless play.

Unless the game is played for the money in it, the stakes are usually very modest, one-half cent a point or one-quarter cent a point being quite common stakes. The lowest stakes of which I have a personal knowledge were 5 cents a hundred points, the highest were \$5 a point. In France it is common to make the *enjeu* (stake) so much per game or rubber, regardless of the exact number of points won. To some extent that custom is followed here by playing for so much "a corner." Where payment is to be made after each rubber, the loser pays the winner sitting on his right. At some clubs it is customary for the score card, setting forth the details and signed by the players, to be turned in to some attendant. The club collects from losing players, and at regular intervals settles with winning players.

In settling a score played at a fixed sum per point odd amounts are commonly disregarded. When the stake is 10 cents a point, players agree to settle either to the nearest dollar or perhaps to the nearest fifty cents. At one-quarter-cent points settlement would be made to the nearest 5 cents.

Side bets follow the game stakes. If you win the rubber but lose on the total score, you also lose your side bet.

If two players desire to play for stakes while the others do not, this can easily be arranged by the first two players always being opponents and retaining their seats. The second two are also always opponents, but exchange seats after each rubber.

"Carrying a player" occurs when one player wants to play for lower stakes than the others or declines to play for money. One of the other players (or an outsider) agrees to back him financially, either in part or wholly, receiving his gains and paying his losses.

If your partner at any time fails to follow suit, always ask, "No more spades [or whatever the suit is], partner?" The inquiry may save you a revoke penalty of three tricks, or 150 points.

If you want temporarily to leave the table when dummy, ask the protection of the table, which is courteously extended to a player, saying, "Please see that my partner does not revoke," or words to that effect.

## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AUCTION BRIDGE

Auction Bridge, or, more briefly, Auction, follows the parent game of Bridge in most particulars. In a few respects the two differ radically.

The cutting, dealing, honor count, 30 points to a game, chicane, slam, and little slam are as at Bridge. If the dealer wins his first bid, Auction is in the main played precisely the same way as Bridge.

Auction differs from Bridge in awarding the right of declaration to the player who contracts to win the highest game score on the deal. If two players offer to win equally high scores, the declaration is made by the one contracting to win the greatest number of tricks. A player bidding Two Hearts undertakes to win 8 tricks, and has the preference over one bidding Two Diamonds, because two hearts count 16, while two diamonds only count 14. A player bidding Three Clubs (worth 18) outbids one bidding Two Royal Spades or Two Royals (worth 18), because it is more difficult to win three odd tricks than it is to win two odd tricks.

The advantage of bidding for the declaration is that no player with fine royals or hearts or a no-trump

hand is forced to waste his strength on an uninteresting spade or club call, as is frequently the case at Bridge.

Regardless of the declaration, the deal passes regularly to the left, as at Bridge. In the latter game the dealer can pass, but at Auction he must bid something. The rules protect the dealer who bids One Spade from weakness by limiting his loss to 100 honor points. Moreover, he can be certain of being outbid on practically every occasion, so that being obliged to make the first bid is no trap to catch the dealer.

Only the declarer can score game points. If he loses, his adversaries score only in the honor column, which does not help them toward winning game or rubber. The successful declarer of hearts, unless doubled, wins exactly the same amount as he would at Bridge; but successful adversaries take 50 honor points for each trick the declarer falls short of his contract, whether he bids no trump, hearts, diamonds, clubs, or spades. Doubling raises the value to 100 per undertrick, and redoubling increases it to 200. This makes a losing game at Auction very costly for the habitual overbidder of his hand, and justly penalizes any player who attempts to secure more than his due declarations. Two hundred fifty honor points are awarded the winner of the rubber.

The average value of a rubber at Auction is 400 points, as against 170 at Bridge. On this account it is customary for players to make the Auction stakes one-half as great per point as at Bridge. The time consumed in bidding makes the average time for an Auction rubber exceed that for one at the older game,

so that an evening's loss on poor Auction hands at half stakes is really apt to be less than on equally bad Bridge hands.

Honor counts are of less consequence at Auction than at Bridge. Five heart honors in one hand are still worth 80 honor points, and the odd trick is still worth 8 game points. There the similarity ceases. If you lose by two heart tricks at Bridge you lose 16 points below the line; but you may win 64 points total by holding 5 honors in one hand. With a certain safe state of score you may not regret such a result. At Auction a similar termination to a heart declaration yields you 80 points above the line; neither side scores below the line, but the adversaries receive 100 honor points. Bridge thus gives a net gain of 64 points, while Auction gives a net loss of 20 points to a declarer on five heart honors in one hand attempting to win 7 tricks and taking only 5 tricks.

At Bridge each side contests merely for tricks. At Auction there are two distinct contests: at bidding, to secure the coveted position of declarer; afterward to secure the greatest possible number of tricks. Spirited bidding results in the declarer having to win several tricks over the book, whereas at Bridge winning the odd trick is sufficient to avoid any loss except a comparatively unimportant one in honors. With exactly the same cards all around, it is far more exciting to struggle for the few tricks which the weaker side can possibly take, if the declarer must win 10 tricks to meet his contract at Auction, than if he has only to win the odd at Bridge.

The information given by four players bidding is

often most enlightening to both sides; sometimes a bid obscures. In any event the information obtained must be assimilated thoroughly to properly play a hand. On the whole, greater skill, a keener knowledge of human nature, and a closer acquaintanceship with card probabilities are required to bid to the extreme limit of safety and play the cards at Auction than to declare and play the same cards at Bridge.

Good team work counts more at the later game than at Bridge. A reckless or erratic player's chances to mislead his partner are also much greater at Auction. This is the only real drawback to the game. Failures of your partner to disclose strength when needed to bid up your hand; neglecting to double or to show his best suit to which you can lead; bidding when he should remain silent, or bidding on another suit when he should support your bid, are all features of the game which have to be faced.

It is generally useless to find fault with your partner, for several reasons: it may further upset his play; habitual faultfinding is unpleasant to all the other players, and is rather a characteristic of an ordinary player than a good one. The best players sometimes are temporarily off their game, or see possibilities in a play which do not appear on the surface.

Sizing up a hand and proper bidding are more important than perfect play of the cards; but both are essential to success. A skilful bidder tries to win on reasonable contracts, and cheerfully surrenders the declaration if he believes he can win more by "setting back" (or "stinging," as it is sometimes called) his opponents on impossible contracts.

A reliable bidding partner is an invaluable asset. Bluff bids are much like false cards—more apt to injure a partner than an opponent—although both have their occasional uses. Considering the score necessities, bids should follow a reasonable system, and clearly disclose what to expect of a partner.

To avoid any misunderstanding because of a similarity in sound between hearts and pass, it is better to say “no,” or “no more,” than to use the word “pass.” Also to attract attention, the prefix one, five, etc., should accompany all bids, as One Spade, Two Clubs, One No Trump, etc. Similarly, it is preferable to say “I double Two Diamonds,” than merely to say “I double” or “double.” The prefix shows what you believe you are doubling, and sometimes prevents a later serious misunderstanding.

Time is well spent in the fundamental principles of any game which you want to play well. To apply what you read, quickly and accurately, requires much practice at the table. An experienced player with equal cards will always beat the purely theoretical player; but between two experienced players the odds are always in favor of the one who plays the system according most nearly with the probabilities.

Until somewhat advanced in the game only *Chief Essentials* of the following chapters need be read. A little reading at a time and much practice is the surest way to learn thoroughly the game.

## WINNING CARDS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

Consider every card having more than even chances to take a trick as a "probable winner."

At trumps the probable winners are: the ace, the fully guarded king and queen (king accompanied by at least one other trump, queen accompanied by not less than two other trumps), and the "extra cards" of the trump suit (all over three cards in the trump suit, if it contains five or more), with the aces and protected (fully guarded) kings of all three plain suits (the three suits not trumps). Five or more trumps in the declarer's hand are thus worth a trick for each trump, less each missing ace, king, and queen in the suit. If one of these is lacking, count four tricks for a 5-card suit; if two are missing, count the suit as probably worth three tricks.

At no trump the probable winners are: all aces and protected kings, all extra-well-guarded queens (queen accompanied by at least three of its suit, or by two others, of which one is an honor), all extra cards of an establishable suit (a long suit accompanied by as many cards of re-entry as there are gaps in its strength), all

cards of a solid suit (one in regular order from ace downward).

Cards of re-entry are aces, protected kings, and extra-well-guarded queens with less than five cards in their suits. A suit of five or more cards is unlikely to be an opponent's strong suit, and hence is unlikely to be led enough times to win with your queen.

If you bid on hearts, the following hand should be counted as probably good for six tricks, since it will win that number, on the average, for the declarer:

Hearts, K-Q-10-6-4; Clubs, A-J-2; Diamonds, Q-5; Spades, A-6-3.

The probable winners are: in hearts, king, queen, and two extra cards; ace clubs; nothing in diamonds; ace spades.

The following hand is probably worth 5 tricks to the declarer of no trumps:

Hearts, K-J; Clubs, K-J-5-3; Diamonds, Q-J-8-7; Spades, A-Q-2.

The probable winners are: ace spades; kings of hearts and clubs; queens of diamonds and spades.

Some of the specified cards may lose, other cards not named may win; but average results, not special cases, must be considered.

### DETAILS:

If you hold the king and one small card of the trump suit, your king is safe if the ace lies with your right-hand opponent, because you can throw your small card on his ace if he leads it; or if he leads low, your

king will win. If the ace lies to your left, and either a low card or the ace is led from there, your king will be safe; or if a low card is led from your right and you play low, your king is safe if your left-hand opponent plays his ace. If your partner has the ace, the only chance of your losing your king will be where both king and ace unfortunately go on the same trick. If you have both king and queen of trumps, both of them may win a trick. It is impossible for both of them to lose. The king and two small trumps also add safety, but even a single guard to a king adds sufficient safety to permit it to be called a probable winner in the sense in which the term is used here. For similar reasons, although to a less extent, a doubly guarded queen of trumps is fair to regard as a probable winner, or a trebly guarded jack of trumps. A "cold" king (one without a guard), or a singly guarded queen, may be fortunate enough to win a trick. When they do, they belong merely to the class of "chance winners," along with small trumps, which win through ruffing a suit of which you hold none, or with a low card which wins a trick because the higher ones have fallen together, or have been discarded.

On account of the danger of being ruffed no card smaller than an ace or guarded king of a plain suit can safely be considered as a probable winning card. Lower cards can sometimes be utilized to win side-suit tricks when a hand is very strong in trumps. Some players assume that a four-card suit will ultimately be apt to win a trick merely on length of suit. It is entirely contrary to the probabilities to assume this, as it means that neither adversary will average to hold

more than three cards of the same suit. If you hold four cards of a suit, the mathematical probabilities concerning the case are as follows:

17 that your suit is longer than any other player's

83 that another player has four of that suit

52 that another player holds more cards of the suit than  
you do

---

152 total chances

One-third of the time your partner will be the other player who holds the long hand in the suit. Therefore, there are 62 chances that your side holds a long card in the suit to 90 chances that your opponents equal or exceed your length of suit.

If you declare and hold five trumps, it leaves only eight others to be divided among the other three players. Consequently you will generally find that after three rounds of trumps you hold the only ones left. For that reason these two extra cards can be considered probable winners. With six trumps you can count on having three extra ones, and so on. With only four trumps there remain nine others to be divided among the three players. Unless each happens to hold exactly three trumps, you will hold no more than some other player, and it is accordingly unsafe to reckon that you hold a "long trump" with only four dealt to you. Even with six trumps you may find some player with seven trumps against you. The chance that either opponent will do so is, however, only about one in fifty thousand, so it need not worry you. Good play is based on probabilities, and not on possibilities.

If we take the largest number of hearts held by any one of the four players and add to it the largest number held by any player in each of the other three suits, the sum of these four amounts will vary from 16 (when no player holds over four cards of any suit) to 52 (when each player holds an entire suit of 13 cards). This sum we can call the number of "prospective winners," since it includes what would be the probable winners in all four suits. Practical play does not directly recognize such a thing as prospective winners, but indirectly scientific play is obliged to consider them. On this account a few facts concerning them will be of interest to deep students of the game.

The average number of prospective winners to a deal is 19.774, or roughly 20. So the average number of prospective winners to a hand is slightly less than 5. The number of prospective winners to a suit is the least possible number of tricks which could be won by that suit if it became the trump; it may be as low as 4 or as high as 13. It is near enough to call its average 5.

The prospective winners in the suit selected as trumps become probable winners in that suit, but only the aces and guarded kings of the other three suits remain probable winners. On an average, there will be 5 probable winners in the trump suit and 6 probable winners in the other three suits combined, leaving 2 chance winners to be made up through ruffs, finesses, an even distribution of cards in a plain suit, or by a plain-suit card winning after trumps are exhausted. The struggle at trumps comes in creating chance winners and defeating probable winners.

Ordinarily the number of cards regarded as probable winners lessens, as when a plain-suit ace is trumped, or a king loses to the ace, and their place is filled by added chance winners. On an average, about six tricks are taken by trumps.

At no trumps the struggle comes in reducing the average of 20 prospective winners to 13 cards actually taking tricks. This is accomplished by establishing a long suit and weakening the opposing side through discards.

On an average, the declarer has 5 probable winners in his hand by picking his declaration. If he declares trumps, he ordinarily reduces the probable winners held by each other hand to an average of 2, with 2 chance winners to fight for. If he declares no trumps, he permits each other hand to retain 5 prospective winners. That is why a no-trump declaration is more of a gamble than a trump declaration; hence the reason that for desperate cases it is the best resort, since it is least apt to reduce the strength of dummy's hand; but for ordinary purposes it should only be bid under favorable conditions, when the declarer holds more than his share of prospective winners.

At trumps, the ability to choose the trump suit averages roughly to mean 5 tricks in the declarer's hand, instead of 2-3 tricks when some one else declares; at no trumps no such reduction in opposing hands comes immediately. The declarer's chief strength at no trumps comes in his perfect knowledge of his resources, his power to combine the strength of both hands to best advantage, the ability to throw the lead from one hand to the other, to lead from the

weak hand to the strong, to pick the adversary through whose hand he wants to lead, and to avoid finessing against the dangerous hand. He can strike immediately to set up his strong suit, while his adversaries are still skirmishing to find the suit in which their joint strength chiefly lies.

## ATTACKING HANDS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

An attacking hand is one sufficiently strong probably to win the odd or more upon its holder's declaration.

At trumps such a hand should contain 5 probable winners, with at least 3 of these in trumps.

At no trumps there are needed for a genuine attacking hand 5 probable winners, including at least one ace, divided among not less than three suits, or 4 probable winners covering all suits, provided that at least one of them is an ace, and that none are lower than well-guarded kings.

Unless you are behind on the rubber game and bid to prevent opponents from going out, it is senseless to secure a contract which you cannot fulfil.

If your partner promises no help, under ordinary circumstances you are not justified in expecting to win a contract with weaker hands than those given above.

When safely ahead of opponents any unusual risk is not justifiable.

Weaker hands should ordinarily be used to support your partner's bid or to try to sting opponents.

## DETAILS:

### ATTACKING DECLARATION AT TRUMPS

To spare small trumps to ruff your adversaries' long suits and still be able to lead them often enough to exhaust opposing trumps necessitates a long trump suit.

The "top honors" (ace, king, or queen) are also necessary to prevent an adversary winning your trump leads and returning his established plain suit for you to ruff. Both length and strength in trumps are necessary to command the situation.

The next best thing to holding both is to have either great strength, as A-K-Q-J, or great length, not less than 6 trumps.

It is not safe to calculate that you hold an extra card (one more of the suit than any other player holds) with only 4 trumps. To be able to win three tricks in a trump suit of only four cards, you must accordingly hold at least 3 honors, one of which must be either the ace or the king. With ace, king, or queen missing, there is no certainty of your winning the desired three tricks; but, taking into consideration dummy's chance to hold one of the missing honors, the chances are reasonable. Any four trump honors will insure taking three tricks.

Four cards, accordingly, is the least length ever utilized by any one for a trump suit, and three honors (including either ace or king) is the least strength necessary for so short a suit.

Five cards in the trump suit averages to insure a longer suit than any one else holds. Even the 6-5-4-

3-2 of trumps will win 2 tricks 25 times out of 79 times, and 1 trick 64 times out of 79.

If, instead of being the lowest possible five cards, they come at random from 2 up to jack, but not higher, 43 times out of 79 you will win two tricks with them, either because neither adversary holds over three trumps or because his last trump is outranked by yours.

Unless your suit of 5 trumps runs unusually low, you are accordingly justified in counting 2 extra cards to it. If headed by the ace or the king, you can calculate that it will win three tricks, and is sufficiently strong for attack, if you hold two outside tricks in addition. Five trumps to the queen is an exceedingly dubious make, unless you hold also the jack or 10-9; in fact, it is a minimum of strength necessary to declare.

Six trumps to ace-king, through the advantage of his position, insures six tricks to the declarer 7 out of 13 times. Seven to ace-king is good for seven tricks 37 out of 56 times. Eight to ace-king is good for eight tricks 28 out of 37 times. Nine to the ace without the king is good for nine tricks 32 out of 59 times. Ten to the ace is good for ten tricks 8 out of 13 times, and 11 to the ace will win a trick for every trump held 23 out of 29 times.

Lacking ace, king, and queen (the top honors), you can still reckon that 6 trumps, ranging from deuce to jack, just as they fall, will average to be worth three tricks. Six trumps, headed by an honor, even the 10, is accordingly a legitimate declaration so far as its own suit is concerned, but with it should go some outside strength.

Eight trumps or more, without an honor, is a strong suit upon which to declare, and is legitimate without outside tricks; but 7 low trumps and no outside tricks is fit only for emergencies.

A hand worth only four tricks is weak; but if three of these can be won by trumps it stands a fair show to succeed.

If you ask dummy to win three tricks when your own hand is worth only four tricks, you have 11 chances in 19 of success. As dummy's cards will be exposed, he must be more conservative than the declarer in calculating his probable winners, giving an extra guard or a supporting honor before he calculates that a plain king or queen will win a trick on his partner's declaration.

### ATTACKING DECLARATION AT NO TRUMPS

The chief distinction between a trump and a no-trump hand comes in the way the strength lies. If concentrated mainly in one suit, especially if it lies largely in a long suit of low cards, it is a trump hand. If the strength is scattered through 3 or 4 suits, particularly if it fails to give the royal or the heart suits, at least three probable tricks, it is a no-trump hand. Frequently either strong trumps or no trumps can be declared upon the same cards.

A single weak suit may ruin the chances to go game at no trumps. Therefore, a trump declaration apt to win the game, or one probably able to win as many tricks as a no trumper, is preferable whenever all four suits are not doubly guarded, or unless three suits can be stopped once and the fourth suit consists of a long

set-up suit. Do not consider a suit as positively establishable and go no trump unless this suit can be established by means of the re-entry in your weakest suit, if game can surely be won at an alternative trump declaration.

Any no trumper without an ace, unless all suits are well guarded, and one of them can be established in one round, is legitimate only as a desperate resort against cautious bidders. Your adversaries can use their aces to establish a suit against singly stopped suits, and will probably count 30 honor points on aces, possibly 100 honor points, against you, in addition to the score for setting you.

Five probable winners properly distributed over at least 3 suits, including at least one ace, is a fair average hand upon which to declare. Four certain winners, unless all are aces, or at least well-guarded kings, is a weak hand, since the average adverse strength will be to the declarer's strength as 11 to 9. Even the strength of his position will scarcely overcome this handicap.

Four aces in one hand urges a no-trump bid unless the game can be won at trumps, on account of power to stop adverse suits and establish partner's long suit; also, on account of the 100 honor-point value of 4 aces in one hand.

Three aces do not compel a no-trump bid. If the hand happens to be very weak in the "top suits" (royals and hearts), with a love score, or weak in all suits with a high score, the best chance often lies in supporting partner's bid. Ordinarily, the 3 aces will, however, bring a hand up to the necessary strength to make some bid.

Two aces and another guarded suit give good grounds for a no trumper when pushed by the score.

The ace of one suit and an established diamond or club suit of six or more cards constitute what is known as a "one-suit no trumper." In similar manner 6 or 7 probable winners, distributed in any way, give a reasonable hand for no-trump bids, if no satisfactory trump call is possible.

Unevenly divided cards, giving part long and part very short suits, unless the latter are well guarded, greatly increase the risks of a no trumper. Irregular hands are, as a rule, best adapted to trump bids.

A theoretical average hand would contain 1 ace, 1 king, 1 queen, 1 jack, and 1 ten. If the strength is well distributed over the various suits, a hand containing one more king or queen than this average hand is suitable for a no trumper.

Caution must be used in considering two or three cards as probable winners when guarded in the slightest legitimate manner possible. A king can be considered as more likely than not to win a trick if singly guarded; but 3 such lightly guarded kings could not be considered as worth three tricks, when in reality they are worth only two tricks. Take the following hand:

Hearts, K-9  
Clubs, A  
Diamonds, K-3  
Spades, Q-J-10-9-8-6-3-2

You are nearly certain to be attacked in one of the three short suits. As the opening lead must come up to you, no apprehension can be felt about stopping

the first lead on a no-trump declaration. You will (unless dummy's hand discloses something different to do) then start to establish your spade suit. Probably dummy can care for one of your short suits, but unless he has the ace of spades you will lose the lead, and in all probability be attacked the second time in the same weak suit where you won your first trick. A slaughter is apt to follow, on top of which your second weak suit will be attacked. You can stop that once, if the lead comes from your left, and again lead a spade, and a second attack follows, which dummy can perhaps stop. If he cannot, your spade suit will be only remnants by the time your third suit is opened.

On the other hand, of course, dummy may have just what you lack, and a slam may follow, but it is risky business. The safer thing to do with such a hand is to bid royals instead of no trumps.

If the probable winners are considered in a reasonable way, they will be found to be your simplest and most reliable guide to what can be done with a hand. As all probabilities given in this work take into account the actual capacity as trick-gainers of these probable winners, and disregard all not mentioned, to make practical use of the probabilities it will be necessary to value a hand as already outlined.

An established suit adds greatly to the strength of a hand. An establishable suit is less desirable, as it involves risks in setting it up. Sequences, also, add strength. If moderately high, like queen, jack, 10, 9, 8, they insure stopping the run of adverse suits, and make an excellent lever to pry out opposing higher cards. Any guarded suit offers an obstacle to oppos-

ing strength, and gives re-entry to a hand. Cards of re-entry are essential to success at no trumps, as a player is helpless, no matter how good a suit he holds, if he cannot win a trick to secure the lead of his strong suit. At trumps, re-entry to lead a long suit can often be obtained by ruffing opposing suits, but no such refuge is found at no trumps.

Half the time a suit is divided among the four players in one of the three following ways:

- 4, 4, 3, and 2 cards to them respectively
- 5, 3, 3, and 2 cards to them respectively
- 5, 4, 3, and 1 cards to them respectively

The other half of the time a suit is divided in one of thirty-six other possible ways.

More than half the time if you hold:

- 3, 4, or 5 of a suit, some other player has only 2
- 6, 7, or 8 of a suit, some other player has only 1
- 9 or more of a suit, some other player has none

About once every deal a suit will go around three times before somebody can ruff, if you only hold three of that suit.

Twice in 9 times you and your partner may both expect to hold the same long suit.

If you declare no trump when holding cards in only three suits, there are 2 chances that your partner can block the missing suit once to 1 chance that you will lose every trick in that suit.

The declarer, with dummy's assistance and the advantage of playing two hands, can more often than not win every trick in trumps when holding:

5 headed by ace, king, and queen  
6, 7, or 8 headed by ace and king  
9 or more headed by ace alone

In sizing up a hand to determine its best use, the various facts and probabilities have to be mentally reviewed, and a decision made whether you had better try to win a contract, to support your partner's bid, to attempt to sting your opponents, or merely to keep down their score as much as possible.

If you have been a Bridge player, remember that merely having to win the odd is quite different from contracting to win a definite number of tricks. If you have been a Whist player, the first thing to learn is that you know absolutely nothing about Auction Bridge on that account, but are positively handicapped by some of its methods of play. Every Auction Bridge player must learn the rules of bid and play of this new game. Then he must adhere to them in every case where he cannot give his partner strong and logical reasons why he thinks the probabilities upon which the rules are based do not apply to the case in hand.

## SCIENTIFIC BIDDING

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

The average strength of a hand gives the ability to win 5 tricks with it, if allowed to select the declaration, and to have the dummy as partner. The average strength of dummy's cards is  $2\frac{2}{3}$  tricks on your declaration. You must therefore count on your partner for 2 tricks. If he can assist you with more than 2 tricks, he can show it by bidding. If his hand is worth two tricks or less, he must pass, unless he has dealt. The dealer is obliged to bid something, and must bid 1-Spade whenever his hand probably cannot win over 2 tricks.

There are only three distinct varieties of bids—"protective," "informatory," and "business."

Protective bids include the 1-Spade bid by dealer when he lacks a higher bid. They also include "take-out bids," which are made by a player who believes that less will be lost on his bid than on the one made by his partner.

A "desperation bid" is also of the protective type when deliberately made with the intention of taking a small loss in preference to losing the rubber game on opponent's call.

Informatory bids show partner that the bidder can help to the extent of at least 3 tricks if the former can make a business bid.

"Invitation bids" are a species of informatory bids which notify the bidder's partner that more than ordinary assistance can be given at no trumps. The genuine informatory bid offers more than ordinary assistance on *any* call chosen by the bidder's partner, so that the distinction between these two is rather in name than in cards held.

"Supporting bids" are really informatory bids made after a partner has bid and has had his bid topped by a higher one. The supporting bid increases partner's bid, so that it outranks that of opponents. An informatory bid, unless coming as a supporting bid, is made merely to show partner that he can count on more than the average assistance of 2 tricks; but such a bid does not expect to win a contract.

Business bids are made with the intention of trying to win a contract, and show sufficient strength to win at least the odd with average card distribution in the other three hands. A high supporting bid and a take-out bid from strength are both varieties of business bids. "Shut-out bids" are strong business bids originally made sufficiently high to warn partner not to change the bid (except on great strength), and intended to prevent opponents from exchanging information through their bids.

Strong hands desire information as to the assistance partner can give, the suit he can care for, and how many tricks he can take. Weak hands should seek to give this information.

If all players make their proper bids the chances are very decidedly against any bid lower than 10 winning the contract. A bid of 1-Royal (9 points), for example, stands 95 in 100 chances that one of the other hands can legitimately overcall it. Lower bids stand still less chances of holding.

Bids of 1-No Trump, 1-Royal, 1-Heart, 2-Diamonds, or 2-Clubs mean business, and must not be made unless the bidder sees his way clear to winning the tricks called for by his bid. Opening bids of Two, except in spades, should only be made either on hands which are probably capable of going game or else hands which are reasonably certain to win the bid, but which are probably worthless on any other call.

Minimum business bids are also made of 1-Diamond and 1-Club at certain scores.

Bids of 1-Diamond, 1-Club, 3-Spades, or 2-Spades can be made without holding enough strength actually to win a contract. They are then informatory bids, and have little chance of holding. 1-Heart should be bid for informatory purposes only when it is also a weak business bid. It is unnecessary to bid 1-Royal for information except in very rare cases.

An opening bid of two or more of any suit except spades is a shut-out bid, since it gives each other player only 1 in 7 chances to overbid prudently without having heard from his partner. An opening bid of 1-No Trump is less final, as it allows each other player 1 in 5 legitimate chances to overbid on his own cards only.

Aces, guarded kings, 3 honors in a suit, or an established suit are the only cards which you can con-

fidently expect will aid your partner, unless you know his suit. Such cards are useful in any of the five declarations he may want. Mere length of suit is useful to him in trumps only if you are short-suited elsewhere. Length of suit is useful to him at no trumps if it happens to supplement his own cards. It is probable, however, that length of suit in low cards will be utterly useless to him, and in consequence an informative bid cannot take it into account. Length of trump suit counts on your own business bids; or in a supporting bid if the length can be used to ruff a suit of which you hold none, or only one card, possibly it may be used to ruff a two-card suit.

### DETAILS:

Scientific bidding, by closely following the probabilities and making due practical allowance for score and personal characteristics of the various players, enables the two members of a team to unite in supporting the bid most favorable to their joint hands. It permits partners to bid the limit warranted by conditions, seldom gives them unfavorable contracts, and leaves the call to opponents whenever less loss will result from losing the declarership than from gaining it. To accomplish all this, the few possible bids must be utilized to inform partner of the most vital facts, and in a way to prove least harmful if he happens to be very weak while opponents are powerful.

The principal things to tell partner are:

1. That you cannot give over average assistance.
2. That you can help by at least 3 tricks.

3. That you have an adverse suit stopped.
4. That you hold a set-up suit, or an establishable suit with the re-entry to set it up.
5. That you can probably win a specific contract with ordinary help from him.
6. That your hand can best be played only on a particular call.
7. That you can defeat opponent's call.

There are more chances that your partner can better afford to bid on some trump call than that he can best go without trumps. A bid offering unusual help at no trumps is apt to be useless information to him unless it also means unusual assistance on his best trump call.

It is also puerile to inform your partner that you merely hold one or two sure tricks, because he is obliged to assume that you have them in order to make most of his bids. It is utter folly to bid on a low call merely because you have an average hand, probably able to win the odd if your bid stands, when you know that your bid will probably be wasted. Weak bids should be utilized solely in attempts to convey clear information which will enable your side to decide upon its best call, and in pushing that call to its reasonable limit.

The simple bidding rules given hereafter will enable you to handle successfully nearly all cases arising. Judgment and experience are necessary to cope with fine players for opponents, unfamiliar bidding systems, and unusual card distributions. When it comes to the play of a hand, much experience, as well as mastering the rules for ordinary cases, is needed. The beginner

can, however, very quickly learn to bid better than most players he meets by thoroughly mastering his bidding rules. It is not at all uncommon to see young players hold their own at Auction against old Whist and Bridge players, because the former gain enough on their better bids to offset the latter's superior play of the hands.

Against players with a penchant for holding back on strong hands, with the intention of setting you, bids must be made more conservatively than against free bidders.

Bluff must be used with great caution against scientific bidders; but it can be used to advantage against players who dislike to lose contracts. The style of bidding must vary to some extent with the character of your partner. With an over-venturesome partner you should rather underbid than bid your hand in full. The reverse is true when coupled to a timid or ultra-conservative partner.

Two thousand three hundred and sixty-eight times in 10,000 (about 1 in 4 times) your partner will hold a hand upon which he can legitimately bid no trumps, upon assurance that you can take at least three tricks, but upon which he would not be justified in bidding no trump as third bidder, because he can see only four tricks in his own hand. Thus an informatory bid of One raises his chances to bid 1-No Trump from 3,023 in 10,000 (the ordinary chance of each player) to 5,391 (an increase of nearly 80 per cent.), giving him 54 chances, instead of 30 chances, in 100 to bid no trumps. There is only 1 in 20 chances that nobody can take you out of even an informatory heart bid,

and if left in you still have 4 in 9 chances to fulfil your contract. In other words, even an informatory bid of 1-Heart (always provided that all players are bidding their hands to the full) has 6,643 chances for good against 275 chances for harm, and 3,082 chances for little or no result either way. Diamond and club informatory bids are still safer and more useful.

Informatory bids have very unfortunately been both misunderstood and improperly used by the majority of players, until many fine players have abandoned their use for the moment. As game can very seldom be won from love on either club or diamond calls, it is self-evident that a rational use of low bids in those suits to show unusual assistance to partner, on any call best suiting his hand, are extremely important. The great secrets of successful and profitable bidding lie in selecting the best call for the joint hands of partners and in bidding this best call to its limit of safety. A bid must show one of two things—the best call, or general assistance for partner's best call. Informatory bids are utilized to show unusual general assistance by using bids of a character which are not used to show decided preference for a particular call. They are made on strength as great as many fine players consider sufficient warrant for making opening bids, without the precaution of letting their partner know that they are merely informatory. The old idea of an informatory bid was to show a suit stopped. Perhaps they were made on only an ace, perhaps on the king and queen. They merely showed "a sure trick" in the suit bid. They should show the suit surely stopped, and 3 probable tricks as a minimum.

Partner's bid is later advanced 1-trick for each trick over three that the informatory bidder can furnish in the chosen best call. It is very simple and very definite.

Chances to win game are worth moderate risks. Informatory bids, used as advocated here, involve very small risks—about 1 chance in 50. Informatory bids often enable heavy scores to be made both by enabling the best final call to be made, and also by enabling a partner more frequently and more safely to double opposing bids. He can do this by the knowledge he possesses of what tricks the informatory bidder can probably win. This is a very important feature of a scientifically played game.

Some players admit that clubs should be bid on strength without length, but they inconsistently decline to admit the same of the diamond suit, although both suits require an equal number of tricks to go game. There are 23 opportunities to bid diamonds on 3 or 4 tricks to 11 chances to do so if they wait for a 5-trick hand to give an informatory bid. They forget that the informatory bid doubles their partner's chances to bid properly while it involves a 2-per-cent. chance of being left in and defeated. A player afraid to accept such odds is out of place at the Auction table. Another thing most players overlook is the power medium cards have to win tricks in the hands of the player who declares, by combining the card strength of his own hand with dummy's. This strength cannot be counted in advance, but it averages to be worth at least one more trick to the declarer's side than to the adversaries' hands, because the latter cannot utilize it.

Although you should not attempt to count in the advantage of playing the two hands in estimating your tricks, still it exists, and is an added reason why informatory bids on short suits are less dangerous than they may appear to the novice.

No trumps should not ordinarily be bid over a previous bid in a suit unless you have that suit stopped. There are 2 in 3 chances that your partner can stop an adverse suit which you lack. If you have two or three small cards in it, your partner has only about even chances to stop that suit. If you bid over two suits like the latter, he has only about 1 in 4 chances to stop them both.

## INFORMATORY BIDS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

Bids of 2-Spades always, 1-Club and 1-Diamond usually, are informatory and mean: "Partner, I have the suit I bid surely stopped, and a hand probably worth at least 3 tricks on any call you choose to make."

A bid of 1-Heart frequently means: "Partner, I have hearts surely stopped. My hand is probably worth at least 3 tricks on any call you make, or 4 tricks if left in." This is informatory, since it does not merely seek a contract, but if the bid holds there are 11 in 19 chances to win at least the odd.

Bids of 3-Spades are always informatory, and mean: "Partner, I have the suit surely stopped, and a hand probably good for at least 5 tricks on any declaration you prefer."

Three-spade bids cannot often be made, as they show 5 tricks' help for partner. If spades are set up, this bid cannot be made, because a set-up spade suit calls for a bid of at least 1-Royal. The 3-Spade bid can be made to show two or three tricks in a short spade suit, with two or three tricks in another short suit, five tricks in all, as follows:

<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
9-8-6-4	A-K	7-5-3-2	A-K-Q
J-7-5-2	A-K-Q	10-6-5-3	A-K
10-8-3	6-5-3-2	A-K-Q	A-Q-J

It is a good opening bid, as it allows your partner to bid heavily on his best suit. It is also a good bid in second place, over 1-Club, but 1-Royal can be bid over 1-Diamond or 1-Heart with the first hand shown. The 3-Spade bid is useless in third or fourth place, whether partner has bid or passed. One objection to bidding 1-Royal even on the first hand is the shortness of the spade suit. The hand contains 4 losing cards in each red suit, and opponents may start a cross ruff, or one may lead winning hearts and diamonds while the other discards clubs. The same is true to a lesser extent on the question of the dealer bidding 1-Club on the second hand, as 1-Club has less chance of standing than 1-Royal. A bid of 1-Club fools your partner into believing you cannot give him the unusual assistance you possess, while a bid of 1-Royal practically asks him not to disturb your bid unless he can win at least three tricks more on his call than on yours. A bid of no trump would be preferable to bidding either in clubs or royals; but, all things considered, the opening 3-Spade bid is best of all. The situation is made very clear, and your partner can take you out of your bid if able to win even two tricks at royals, hearts, diamonds, or three tricks at clubs. The chances that he cannot win even two tricks on some call are only 1 in 44, not to mention the chances that one opponent will prefer to outbid you, rather than leave you in.

The only sure stops to a suit which will ordinarily be apt also to win tricks are either the ace, or king and queen, or king, jack, and 10, or sometimes the queen, jack, and 10.

Your partner must never expect to utilize your card for 3 tricks at his own choice of trumps unless he holds at least 5 trumps, and 6 trumps are better. It is frequently necessary to exhaust opponents of trumps before side strength can be utilized.

### Examples of Informatory Bid Hands

	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
No. 1	Q-J-2	A-8-6-3	8-4	K-Q-J-7
No. 2	9-8	A-K-8	9-7-5-4-2	A-6-3
No. 3	J-5-4	A-K-7-3	K-6-2	10-4-2
No. 4	A-K	10-8-6-2	K-Q-9-3	10-9-5
No. 5	A-K-Q	K-8-5-2	J-10-4	10-8-5
No. 6	J-9-3	A-K-Q-7	6-5-2	8-6-4
No. 7	9-6-4	10-7-3	K-Q-J-6	A-K-Q
No. 8	10-8-6-2	A-K-J	J-9-3	A-K-J
No. 9	8-6-4	K-7-2	A-K-Q-J	9-6-2
No. 10	A-K-J-10	9-6	J-10-8-4	K-8-6
No. 11	A-K-J-2	8-7-4	9-5-2	A-K-6

Nos. 1 and 2 should be bid 2-Spades, since that is the lowest suit surely stopped while the hands are worth 3 probable tricks on any call, provided at trumps your partner has a long trump suit. No. 1 is also an opening no-trump bid; but the 2-Spade bid is safer, since you would like to know where the diamond and the remaining club strength lies. If your partner has strength in one of these suits he should bid 1-Club or 1-Diamond. If he is strong in both of them he can

bid 1-No Trump. If your partner should bid 1-Heart while you hold No. 1, you could advance his bid to 2-Hearts, because your hand will probably win 4 tricks on that make, and you have shown only 3 tricks in your original bid.

No. 3 warrants a 1-Club bid, and No. 4 a bid of 1-Diamond. No. 5 calls for a bid of 1-Heart under certain circumstances.

No. 6 calls for 1-Club bid. Nos. 7 and 8 are hands worth bids of 3-Spades. No. 7 can also be bid 1-Diamond, and No. 8 can be bid 1-Club; but the 3-Spade bid is better.

No. 9 is worth a bid of 1-Diamond.

Nos. 10 and 11 are good for a 1-Heart bid.

Many players would bid 1-No Trump on such hands as are shown above, but the informatory bids given are safer, and will average to result better in finally bringing out the best bid for the combined hands.

### DETAILS:

The dealer has 4,350 in 10,000 chances (44 in 100 chances) to make a legitimate opening bid of 10 or more points. Each other player has even chances to overcome a 9-point bid. Therefore, bids lower than 8 can be considered as probably informatory. A bid of 1-Royal cannot be considered as informatory, since 2-Spades or 3-Spades can be bid for that purpose. Neither can a bid of 1-Heart be considered as purely informatory, although it indicates top cards held.

You have 1,532 in 10,000 chances (15 in 100 chances) in each of the suits to guarantee that you can surely stop the suit in which you bid, with a hand able to win not less than 3 tricks at no trumps, and the same on any trump make, provided your partner holds enough trumps to exhaust opponents. Such a hand can, however, ordinarily win 3 tricks, regardless of the length of partner's trump suit. The 3-trick hands use bids of 2-Spades, 1-Club, or 1-Diamond. The only other available informative bid amounting to less than 10 points is one of 3-Spades.

A 4-Spade bid would necessitate a weak royal hand, and is bid by some players when holding powerful cards in spades, and only four of that suit. It requests partner to bid 1-Royal if he lacks an attacking hand. It is useful to a player who wishes his partner to play the hand, otherwise he had better bid 2-Spades on ability to win 3 tricks, or 1-Royal if he is able to win 4 sure tricks.

Other bids should be reserved for hands where the bidder believes that he can win those contracts, and where he does not want his partner to outbid him unless his partner can do so on the strength of his own hand alone.

In the majority of cases your hand is really of more use to a partner if you can win a trick or two outside your bidding suit than if the strength lies wholly in one suit. The probabilities are decidedly in favor of using the 3-Spade bid to inform your partner: "I can win at least 5 tricks at no trumps or at trumps, provided you can exhaust opponents' hands."

Be sure that a partner understands your use of

**informatory** bids—especially the 3-Spade bid—before you start playing with him.

One feature should be particularly noted concerning **informatory** bids. If they are made in a very short suit, more than half the time an opponent can successfully double them if he chooses. There is very little danger from this in most cases. First, because he can ordinarily make more by bidding on his own strong cards; and, next, because either your partner or his will be almost certain to change the bid. Usually, a suit in which you can bid because you have it stopped with honors will be long enough so that it is unlikely to be very long with an opponent; but sometimes you may hold a suit like this:

A-3 or A-K or K-Q or K-J-10 or A-K-Q

Ordinarily, it is proper to show such a suit stopped, if your partner understands your bids and if the suit is of low value. If the suit happens to be hearts or royals, the **informatory** bid is unwarranted in nearly all cases. There are few rules which cannot be advantageously broken in emergencies.

Some players never make a heart bid except on ability to win 5 tricks. This is a mistake, as it sometimes loses valuable chances to show assistance to your partner. It is better, however, to refrain from such bids unless your hand is good for 4 tricks at hearts if doubled and you are left in. Such a bid is **informatory** only in the sense that its bidder is perfectly willing to be taken out, since it is really bid on a weak attacking hand. The One bid shows tops.

The minimum heart length also should be 4, for

safety's sake, for such a bid, or three, consisting of ace, king, and queen. If your partner has bid 1-Spade, or if he has passed, it is usually best to refrain from such a bid, as it is unlikely to do any good. If you deal, or if you can bid second over a bid of 1-Spade, or if your partner has shown strength by an informatory bid and is evidently looking for no trumps, it is fairly safe to bid hearts for information, and it will pay in the long run to do so, provided your hand is fit for attack if left in.

Hands suitable for these minimum bids in hearts are A-K-Q-X, or A-K-Q, or A-K-J-X, with an outside king; A-K-10-X, or K-J-10-9, or A-J-10-X, or K-Q-J-X, if accompanied by two outside kings. If such hands are accompanied by outside aces or other sure stops, the bid would ordinarily be made in the lowest suit which is surely stopped, instead of being bid 1-Heart.

Many 1-Heart bid hands approach closely to 1-No Trump hands; some of them are quite as good for opening bids of 1-No Trump, since they must have outside strength in one or more suits.

Except in the spade suit bids of One in any call indicate "tops" (Ace, or King and Queen, or King, Jack, and 10, or in rare cases Queen, Jack, and 10). One bids do not request partner not to make another call, and he is at liberty to assume either that you want to remain in or that you have better than ordinary assistance for another call better suited to his hand. If you cannot properly assist his call you must then overcall him. This makes it incumbent upon each player not to make misleading bids. Hands not worthy of

advancing a bid, if unable to give partner more than average assistance of 2 tricks, are generally unworthy of a bid at all. If you bid One on a heart hand able to win only 4 tricks on its own call, but incapable of winning more than 2 tricks on all other calls, you have bid unwisely, and your partner has a right to take you to task for it. But if you bid One on a heart hand able to win only 4 tricks if left in, or 3 tricks on any other possible call, it does not matter whether your partner assumes that you want to be left in and advances your bid or whether he takes you out. He has no right to criticize your bid. It is true that if he advances your bid on his ability to take 3 tricks at hearts that you have jointly contracted to win 8 tricks, whereas there are visible only 7 tricks in the two hands. Nevertheless, the declarer, through his advantageous position of playing both hands, averages to win 1 trick on his play, through finesse, cross-ruff, establishment of a long suit, or other scheme of play. Moreover, it is always better to go down 1 trick than to give opponents an even chance to go game.

It is not justifiable to bid 1-Heart on a hand like this, Hearts K-Q-X-X-X, without outside tricks, although you can win the odd 11 in 19 times. In 19 average hands you would win 11 times at 8 points per trick, but you would lose 7 times at 50 (or 100 if doubled) points per trick. If the hand was Hearts A-K-X-X, and an outside A-K, the probable trick-taking value would be about the same; but in the first case you have nothing worth while to assist your partner or to resist an opposing call, in the second case you have something substantial in both those

cases, and have shown your partner his lead at no trumps when you can win 4 tricks. In the first case you have only 2 in 3 chances to win 2 tricks at no trumps on his lead to the suit you have shown. The additional general strength of the second hand makes it worth a bid, whereas the bid on the first hand would probably prove misleading.

With only about 1 in 20 chances that some other player cannot legitimately outbid 1-Heart, it would seem at first that purely informatory bids in that suit could as well be made as in any other. The first reason why this is untrue is the general ignorance of players as to the probabilities and the great advantage attending informatory bidding. The next reason is because it takes only one more trick to go game at hearts than at no trumps, and much less risk is attached to the heart call. Unless holding pronounced strength for another call, your partner will almost invariably leave you in hearts. The 54 chances in 100 which your informatory bid gives your partner prudently to bid no trump are accordingly lost, to say nothing of his chances to bid on a suit; and your two adversaries have each 43 in 100 chances legitimately to take you out. The object of such a bid is to assist partner to the call best fitting joint hands. If such a call does not do much to block adversaries, but practically cuts your partner off from his best call, it is serving no useful purpose; and until it does so it must be abandoned, as it incurs risk without proportionate gain.

## BUSINESS BIDS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

A bid of 1-Diamond or 1-Club may be a low business bid, but is usually informative under any ordinary circumstances. One Heart is more apt than not to mean strictly business; it is never purely informative. Opening bids of 2-Clubs, 2-Diamonds, 2-Hearts, 1-Royal (except in very rare cases), and 1-No Trump always mean strictly business.

Attacking hands warrant business bids. These hands have already been illustrated in a previous chapter.

No trumps can be bid legitimately on any attacking hand, as already detailed, on the opening bid. It can be bid by any later player who has an attacking hand and guards in the suits bid by his opponents. If your partner bids on a suit, you can justly bid no trumps with two other guarded suits. It is ordinarily unwise to bid no trumps with two unguarded suits.

Hearts, A-3; Clubs, K-Q-6; Diamonds, A-Q-J-4-2; Spades, 10-8-6 illustrates a no-trump bid upon a regular Bridge no trumper, as does the next hand.

Hearts, A-7-4; Clubs, A-10-6-3; Diamonds, A-J-8; Spades, A-9-2.

It is more legitimate to bid on a hand like the following without an ace than to declare on such a hand at Bridge, since honor values are of less consequence at Auction. Every suit is safely stopped.

Hearts, K-Q-2; Clubs, K-J-10; Diamonds, Q-J-10-9; Spades, K-Q-9.

In an emergency (with opponents on their last game) the first hand below is worthy of an opening no-trump bid; while the second hand is sometimes worthy of the same with players who are bidding freely:

<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
9-8-5	A-6-3	K-J-10-9	A-10-4
4-2	A-K-Q-10-9	J-9-8	A-9-4

Ordinarily, however, on the first hand 2-Spades can be bid, and on the latter bid 1-Club on a free bid or 2-Clubs on a forced bid.

Five probable winners always justify a bid of 2-Royals, or 2-Hearts over 1-No Trump, but only One should be bid on such hands unless forced.

Six probable winners warrant opening bids of Two, at clubs, diamonds, hearts, or royals on hands unfit to assist or resist no trumps.

Seven probable winners, regardless of their ability to assist at no trumps, obligates an opening bid of 2-Royals or 2-Hearts. If your partner has a no-trump hand you can go game on your declaration about as surely as on his, and much less risk involved. As it takes 5 tricks to go game with diamonds and clubs, discretion must be employed in shutting out a partner by an opening bid of Two, even when you can win seven tricks yourself.

## DETAILS:

Bids of 8 or more mean business. Such bids are justified only by sufficient strength probably to win, or by a dangerous score, or a desire to push a rash opponent's bid beyond the limit of safety. You have about 1 in 3 chances that a legitimate bid of 1-No Trump will neither be overcalled nor doubled.

If the strength outside your hand is evenly divided no great harm nor decided gain can result from a light no trumper. Unevenly divided strength will favor your partner only one-third of the time. Two-thirds of the time it will be against you. There are times when luck is with you, when very light no trumpers pay; but with the luck against your side they very decidedly do not pay. On the whole, with scientific opponents, they lose more than they win, besides rendering a game draggy and uninteresting. If both sides follow the tactics of bidding gossamer no trumpers, and of not overbidding opposing no trumpers, a rubber often hobbles along for an hour or two. Interesting games come from each player bidding according to his cards, neither overbidding with weak cards (except in an emergency) nor hanging back.

Owing to the ability of all four players to bid, a final declaration is generally capable of winning more tricks than an average Bridge call. On that account a large percentage of hands run out the game. In reality, with correct bidding, the average score on a winning hand should be close to 30 game points. There is little use in risking being stung on a light no trumper when

it is probable that your strength can better be employed in supporting some strong make of your partner.

A strong royal or heart make is safer than most no trumpers, and almost as sure to run out the game. The same can be said of diamonds with a score already 2 or more, and of clubs with a score of 6 or more. Two bids on 5 probable winners gives 546 in 1,000 chances to make good, but the losses are so out of proportion to the gains that it is not ordinarily justifiable to bid that way originally. It is, however, justifiable as a forced bid over 1-No Trump, also as a desperation bid with a dangerous score.

Two bids on 6 probable winners have 764 in 1,000 chances to make good, and are entirely justifiable under any score conditions.

Some players follow the unscientific system of bidding 2-Clubs or 2-Diamonds on a long-established suit, or one with ample re-entry to establish it. The proper opening bid is, however, 1-Club or 1-Diamond. This shows more than average assistance on any call that your partner wishes to make. You can advance his bid as much as your hand warrants. There are more chances that he can better bid trumps than no trumps, and for various reasons a very long side suit may not help his trump call very materially. This reserves the 2-Bid for occasions where you cannot help your partner as much as he can probably help you. Many comfortable scores are made in this way, while opponents are shut out from exchanging informative bids. No-trump strength in your partner's hand cannot injure yours, and your joint cards stand better

chances of going game at trumps than at no trump, provided you utilize the shut-out bid wisely.

Out of every 33 chances that your partner has to make a business bid, 27 are on 5-trick hands, 5 are on 6-trick hands, and only 1 is on a hand worth 7 tricks on his best call. Consequently you stand small chances of harming your partner when you shut him out on a hand worth a large number of tricks on your best call, but which cannot give other calls more than average assistance.

To illustrate the advantage derived from the protective bid we will take hands containing 7 diamonds. It is possible to deal 5,598,661,068 different ones. Of these 1,808,107,488 (or 32 per cent.) would have the diamonds neither established nor establishable through the re-entry cards held, but in each of these hands 6 probable winning cards on a diamond call would be held, and where partner could probably assist the call to the extent of at least 2 tricks. To utilize the 2-Diamond bid to show established or establishable suits would be to deprive the holder of 7 diamonds of 32 per cent. of his chances to make his best bids, and ones which would be apt to go game whenever his partner held no-trump strength. On longer suits the mischief would be greater. Such curtailment of a partner's right to bid something which cannot often do harm, and which very often will yield a game, is neither logical nor profitable. The same is true of 2-bids in clubs.

A vital requisite to the success of any system of play is the intelligent co-operation of your partner. If he insists upon following a poorer system than the one

you prefer, it is better to yield to his desire and to follow that one consistently than it is to attempt to play your way while he plays his way.

Although an opening bid of 2-Hearts can be properly made on 6 probable tricks, it is ordinarily better to bid only One, to allow your partner to go no trump or royals, if your hand will be of great assistance to him. The first hand below is probably worth at least 6 heart tricks, but is apt to be of no value at no trumps, so a shut-out bid of Two had better be made at once. If your partner has a no-trump hand, or one worth 3 tricks' assistance, you can probably go game at hearts. The second hand can be bid One, since it will be of great assistance at no trumps.

<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
K-10-9-8-7-5-4-2	10-3	J-2	6
A-K-Q-J-8	J-10-6	A-J-3	Q-10

With a very reckless partner, the last hand had better be bid Two, in order to shut out a risky no trumper, and to avoid argument if you bid Two over his no-trump bid. If he has a hand really worth a no-trump bid you can go game on either call.

Eight sure tricks gives 886 in 1,000 chances of winning 3 odd tricks or more, and, theoretically obligates an opening bid of Three. It is hardly necessary to bid so high on royals or hearts, since you will keep on going up anyway. If you have nothing in those suits and cannot help at no trumps, it is as well to bid 3-Diamonds or 3-Clubs at once on 8 sure tricks.

It might seem as if One might be bid on 8 sure tricks as well as to make the higher bid; but you can safely

go game if your partner has a no-trump hand, as his cards must yield you 3 tricks.

If your partner bids 1-Royal, and your bidding turn comes with a hand unable to assist him to the extent of two tricks, a take-out bid of Two should be made in a lower suit if your hand is worth 5 sure tricks at hearts, diamonds, or clubs. The same is true if you can assist your partner to the extent of the usual two probable tricks but hold only a singleton of his suit or none of his suit. In this case it is likely that one opponent holds as many as your partner of his suit. If he is especially strong he can bid Two over your warning bid.

Take-out bids show partner the true situation, since you will not bid on a lower suit than he has unless you can probably make your contract but cannot help his contract by 2 tricks, or unless you are very short in his suit, so that your bid is apt to turn out better than his bid. If short in your partner's suit but strong in the other three suits, you can bid 1-No Trump when lacking a safer suit bid.

If your partner bids 1-Heart and you take him out with 2-Diamonds or 2-Clubs (because your hand is worth at least 5 tricks on your call and less than 2 tricks on his call), he has ordinarily no right to raise your bid unless his hand can assist you by at least 4 possible tricks (because he must know that his bid has already been counted as guaranteeing 3 probable tricks).

It is generally unwise to bid no trumps over a suit which you cannot stop. You can bid 3-Spades over 1-Club, and thus ask your partner to bid no trumps in case he can stop the club suit. If the adverse suit

is royals, hearts, or diamonds, the spade bid is practically eliminated. A dangerous score and a good, strong no-trump hand, even if weak in the adverse suit, justifies the risk of bidding no trumps.

Even with a safe score (adversaries' score so low that they cannot go game on the hand), if your hand is evenly divided between the suits you can go no trumps over an adverse suit bid, even if you cannot stop that suit, provided your hand is very strong in the other 3 suits, so that it is good for at least 7 tricks. With ordinary help from your partner, and the probability that he can stop the adverse suit, you can go game. If the adversaries are very strong they will probably continue their suit bid, giving you a good chance to double them.

If 1-Heart has been bid, you should go no trumps on this hand: Hearts, J-9-5; Clubs, A-K-4; Diamonds, K-Q-10-9; Spades, A-K-Q.

The chances are very much against your opponents being able to win 7 tricks against you at no trumps, and almost out of the question that they can successfully bid 2-Hearts.

Hands like above are comparatively rare, and do not nullify the general rule not to bid no trumps over an adverse suit unless you can stop that suit at least once, especially if your suits differ much in length. In the latter case you can more safely bid your best suit.

Third-hand bids, when partner has bid 1-Spade, must usually be confined to business bids, and caution must be used in advancing them when overcalled.

Fourth-hand bids, when partner has passed a 1-Spade bid, must also be made cautiously. If no ad-

verse bid probably able to win the game has been made, it is best to pass with a hand requiring over 3 tricks' assistance from your partner to go game.

Bids of One by your partner, which may be either informatory or business, can be assumed to be the former if you desire to change the suit, and the latter if you want to raise his bid. If you bid 1-No Trump on the assumption that his bid is purely informatory, he can raise it if he really means business and cannot properly assist your bid.

## PROTECTIVE BIDS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

One-Spade bids and take-out bids are made for protection. In the ordinary sense they are neither informatory nor business bids.

The laws of Auction Bridge limit the loss of a bidder of 1-Spade to 100 points, regardless of the number of tricks he loses, even if he is doubled, provided he does not redouble. Consequently, 1-Spade is the regulation opening bid on all non-attacking hands wherein no suit contains an absolute stop, with 3 general tricks.

When you hold a worthless hand it is better to take your partner out of a bid of 2-Spades by bidding 1-Royal than allow him to be left in on his opening bid. It is, however, impossible for partner to detect that your bid of 1-Royal means utter weakness instead of strength. On this account many players bid 3-Spades over 2-Spades, instead of 1-Royal. It requests partner to select his own protective bid.

A take-out bid of 2-Royals, 2-Hearts, 2-Diamonds, or 2-Clubs is made over partner's 1-No Trump bid when you cannot probably help his no-trump bid

as much as his no-trump hand can help your suit bid.

If you have a long suit of low trumps, you can probably utilize your partner's strength as dummy to within one trick of what he could win with it as declarer. If you can win two tricks more with your cards on your trump bid than you could help your partner at no trumps, the final result will be the same in either case, because you make a gain of one trick by the change of call, but you have at the same time contracted to win one trick more. If, however, your hand at your selected trump is probably worth three tricks more than it is worth on what your partner bids, you will probably gain one trick by overbidding his no trumper.

The following hands should be utilized on take-out bids, if your partner bids 1-No Trump:

<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamond</i>	<i>Spades</i>
9-8-7-6-4-2	J-2	9-5-3	10-8
10-9-8-5-4-2	9-8-3	10-7-4-2	—
7-3	8-7	Q-10-8-6-5-2	J-7-5
9-6-4-2	—	Q	A-K-10-8- 6-5-4-2
8	J-10-9-6-4-3-2	J-9-4	10-9

With the first two hands bid 2-Hearts; bid 2-Diamonds on the next; bid 2-Royals on the fourth hand; on the last hand bid 2-Clubs. If he happens to have a long suit of the kind you bid, it is probable that between you a set-up suit of value will result. He can then bid 2-No Trumps if he has the other suits stopped, otherwise he can surrender the call to you.

Six or more cards of a suit ordinarily urge a take-out if your partner bids no trump.

### DETAILS:

A bid of 1-Spade should ordinarily be made on such hands as the following, since they are not attacking hands, neither can they assist partner to the extent of three tricks on all five possible calls:

	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
No. 1	J-8-6	Q-9-2	K-J-10-3	Q-8-4
No. 2	A-K-4	10-7-5	Q-3-2	9-8-6-2
No. 3	K-10-7-6-4	K-10-6-3	4	8-7-5

If your partner should bid 1-No Trump and be overcalled by 2-Diamonds, you could raise his bid to 2-No Trumps with No. 1, since you can surely stop diamonds, and can perhaps assist him on the other suits. If his bid of 1-Diamond should be overcalled by 1-Heart, you can go 2-Diamonds with No. 2. If his 1-Heart bid should be overcalled by 2-Diamonds, No. 3 warrants your bidding 2-Hearts.

If your partner bids 2-Spades, and opponents bid 1-Diamond with a considerable score, you could bid 1-Heart with No. 3. If they then bid 2-Diamonds and your partner says nothing, you can make a desperation bid of 2-Hearts, not with the idea of actually winning it, but because the score demands the risk. Your probable score (if your partner can deliver what his bid promises) will be "one down." The possibility of losing 50 is preferable to the probability of oppo-

nents going game and rubber if you do not take the chance.

If your partner bids an original no trump when you hold a hand probably worth at least 3 tricks more if you declare a trump than upon his no trumper, you had better make a take-out bid of Two, in order to disclose the situation. The following hands are illustrative of this principle:

<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
K-10-9-8-6-3	9-7-4	Q	10-8-5
6-3	<hr/>	A-8-7-5-4-3-2	8-5-4-2
A-K-Q-6-4-2	4-2	9-5	J-7-4

The first hand is probably worth 4 tricks at hearts and perhaps only 1 trick at no trumps. The second hand is probably good for 5 tricks at diamonds and possibly only 1 trick at no trumps. The third hand is probably worth 6 tricks at hearts or at no trumps. In this case the bid is made because you can probably go game at hearts, while he may have another bad suit which will defeat him at no trumps.

In each case you probably have sufficient trumps to exhaust opponents, and can then utilize your partner's hand as if it were no trumps. His hand should average to yield 4 tricks, or else he could not bid no trumps.

The probable result of this first hand on your take-out is to fulfil your contract; on his bid, 1-down.

The probable result of your bid on the second hand is to win 1-over trick; on his hand it is to go 1-down.

The third hand will probably result in game on either call, but 2-Hearts is the safer bid.

If he is well guarded in all suits, and happens to hold a long suit in common with you, he can bid 2-No Trumps, and nobody will be hurt. In any event, your warning bid gives him a chance to retreat from a possible dangerous position, or assures him of help with the long suit in common. It is for him to choose what he will do.

That a take-out bid of Two should be made by any one on five to a jack and nothing else over partner's bid of 1-No Trump may seem surprising.

The mathematical probabilities of both bids are alike—two down. The advantage claimed for the take-out in this case is not to win more, but to show partner the real situation. The take-out enables the original bidder to let it stand or to bid 2-No Trumps. Each individual case of this kind would have to be handled according to the cards held by the 1-No Trump bidder. The Two bid should warn him that partner's hand is probably worth three tricks more on the suit bid than at no trumps. In the last case cited it is worth 11 in 19 times two tricks more at trumps than at no trumps and the bid is accordingly misleading. A take-out bid from weakness should never be made on less than five to queen or six to a lower card. In fact, five to a queen is about as likely to help at no trumps as it is to win three tricks at trumps, while five to a king or ace are quite as apt to help partner's no trumper as they are to fulfil a contract of two.

Only 25 in 79 times will a 5-card suit be able to win two more tricks at trumps than it can at no trumps, while the former bid requires at least one more trick to go game in case the two hands combine perfectly

on the suit bid. Your partner's hand averages to be worth one trick less when exposed than when it is concealed. Doubles are more frequently made of 2-bids than of 1-bids. The average number of tricks-down is identical on the two styles of bid. There is insufficient reward for such successful take-out bids, and too great penalties when they fail. They cannot logically be employed by players who seek safe bids.

With your strength massed in a single suit which has over 5 cards you can bid Three instead of Two (on ability to win 6 tricks) over your partner's no trump, but only when you hold 4 heart or royal honors, and consequently desire the high honor score. Unless your partner holds an honor score of 100 for aces he should never disregard your take-out bid of Three. At love score you should be able to win 7 tricks to make properly such a bid for club or diamond honor score.

## SUPPORTING BIDS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

Your partner counts on you for two tricks assistance before you bid. You cannot raise his bid unless you can give him at least one more trick than he expects to find. If you have shown him three tricks general assistance by an informatory bid, you cannot raise his bid unless your hand is worth four tricks on his call.

If your partner gives an informatory bid of 2-Spades he shows only 3 tricks, but his hand is probably good for 4 or 5 tricks, if played at spades or royals. You can raise such a bid to 2-Royals when your hand is probably worth 4 tricks on his call and not worth a bid on anything else.

Do not figure a long line of low trumps as worth anything to your partner beyond the tricks they can win through ruffing your very short suits (a void suit can probably be ruffed twice, a singleton side suit offers one ruff, a doubleton side suit offers only a doubtful chance to ruff at all). Figure top trump honors (ace, king, and queen) as each worth a trick, directly or indirectly; so also is a sure stop to adversaries' best suit. Each

ace and protected king of side suits is worth a trick, and a combined ace-queen is probably worth 2 tricks, unless in a very long side suit. An established suit and several small trumps are apt to be worth a trick for each card of the set-up suit, but an established suit in a "chicane hand" (one without a trump) cannot be reckoned to be worth over 2 tricks, since so many adverse trumps are liable to be held.

The following hands are worth a supporting heart bid:

<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
A-2	A-K-9-6	10-8-7-4	J-3-2
6-4-3	K-Q-7-3	—————	Q-9-7-6-5-3
Q-9-6-4	K-4-2	A-9-5	J-8-4
Q-J-10-4	7-5-3	9-8-6	A-10-7
J-10-6-3-2	—————	10-5-4-3	9-8-6-5
7-5-4-3	9-6	J-6-2	A-K-Q-J

The following hands cannot properly advance the heart bid:

<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
10-8-6-3	J-7-4	A-K-8	10-7-3
9-7-6-4-2	A-6-5	9-3	J-8-5
J-9-8-6-5-2	Q-3	8-6	10-9-6
—————	A-K-Q-J	10-7-5-4-2	8-7-5-3
—————	K-9-7-6-2	K-8-6-3	K-10-9-4

### DETAILS:

Suppose the declarer wins a 2-Heart bid, his partner having supported his weak bid of One, and the hands for his side are:

	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
Declarer	A-K-J-7-5	10-6-3	J-9-4	Q-2
Dummy	Q-10-9-6-4	J-8-5	8-6-2	K-4

The best they can hope for is to be 2-down. They must lose 3 tricks each in clubs and diamonds and 1 trick in spades. The declarer has the right to estimate his hand at 4 tricks, and will average to win that number of tricks. The error comes because they each count 2 tricks for extra cards in trumps. If one of them had a missing suit, or if both were short-suited differently, these extra trumps could be used, but under the circumstances dummy's hand is not worth over the usual two tricks.

Had the hands been divided this way, the contract could probably be made:

	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
Declarer	A-K-J-7-5	J-10-6-3	J-9	Q-2
Dummy	Q-10-9-6-4	8-5	8-6-4-2	K-4

Only 2 tricks each in clubs and diamonds need be lost, and 1 trick in spades.

Again, suppose the hands to have been divided this way:

	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
Declarer	A-K-J-7-5	J-10-8-6-3	————	K-Q-2
Dummy	Q-10-9-6-4	5	J-9-8-6-4-2	4

If the clubs are not opened until after dummy has the chance to discard his singleton on declarer's winning spade, it is possible for a little slam to be made. The probable result is, however, that the declarer will take

9 or 10 tricks, depending upon the way spades lie and are opened.

It is, of course, a fact that any 13 cards are theoretically as likely to be found in a hand as any other 13 cards. That refers only to the particular cards held. It does not refer to the species of hand held. We have three distinct varieties of hands above, and they do not occur with equal frequency. A hand divided among the four suits in a way to hold in them 5-3-3-2 cards, respectively, occurs on an average 246 times in the same number of deals that one divided 5-4-2-2 will occur 168 times, or a hand divided 5-5-3-0 occur 14 times, or a hand divided 6-5-1-1 occur 11 times. Ignorance of this fact, that certain species of hands are common while others are rare, has caused many supporters of erroneous theories to bolster them up by illustrative hands of rare occurrence. As already stated, probabilities, not possibilities, should guide your play.

Just as the general rule is not to bid no trump over a suit bid unless you have a probable stop to the suit, so you should ordinarily refrain from supporting your partner's no trumper over an adverse subsequent suit bid unless you can surely stop that suit. If its only bidder plays before you do, a well-guarded king or queen may answer; but if he plays after you do, so that your hand will be led through, a sure stop should ordinarily be held.

Under safe conditions of score, a stop to the adverse suit, with a total of 3 tricks' assistance, is necessary for a supporting bid at no trumps. Under bad score conditions the certain stop to the adverse suit bid, even if only one other trick is held, is sufficient to war-

rant an advance. With anything weaker it is best to let the original no-trump bidder decide what he will do.

Under ordinary score conditions it is sometimes justifiable to support your partner's no-trump bid when you cannot stop a suit bid against him. Circumstances tending to warrant such a course are: a partner who does not bid no trumps on shadows; a hand evenly divided between suits, so that it is probable that the suit-bidder has not an excessively long suit; the cards in hand apt to be worth 4 tricks at no trumps. Your partner must have cards which he believes are worth at least 4 or 5 tricks to have bid no trumps originally. The advantage of his position should give you the contract under the circumstances. While such legitimate supporting bids are of rare occurrence, they do occur, as shown in the following case:

The declarer's bid is 1-No Trump on:

Hearts, 8-6-3; Clubs, Q-J-9; Diamonds, A-7-4; Spades, A-K-Q-6.

The next player goes 2-Hearts on:

Hearts, A-K-Q-J; Clubs, A-6-2; Diamonds, 8-3-2; Spades, 7-5-4.

You can bid 2-No Trumps with:

Hearts, 10-9-7; Clubs, K-8-7; Diamonds, K-Q-J; Spades, J-10-9-8.

Judging from your own cards alone, you are apt to win a trick in clubs, at least 2 tricks in diamonds, and a trick in spades if it goes around sufficiently often. It is possible (before you know what others hold) that your hearts will either win a trick or enable your partner to do so.

Strong reasons for advancing your partner's trump bid are found in all hands worth an informatory bid. Aside from a chance to ruff, and honors in your partner's trump suit, a hand not worth an informatory bid is not suitable for a supporting bid.

## INTERPRETING BIDS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

#### OPENING BIDS

It is necessary to recognize instantly the probable meaning of bids made by other players, as well as to make correctly your own bids.

One Spade indicates inability to stop surely any suit and assist partner's call with 3 tricks.

Two Spades, 1-Club, 1-Diamond, and 1-Heart can be assumed to show the suit named surely stopped, and at least 3 tricks' assistance at no trumps. If the bid turns out to mean only business, that fact will be shown by its bidder increasing it over your bid. Any of these bids except 2-Spades may, of course, be made on hands able to win the odd if left in. Properly bid, 1-Heart hands can win a minimum of 4 tricks if left in; but the others cannot be counted on to win over 3 tricks.

Three-Spade bids announce hands good for 5 tricks at no trumps. They indicate two short solid suits, one of which is spades.

Royal bids always mean business. They show a probable desire to be let alone, but do not request this on a bid of 1-Royal.

All 2-bids, except in spades, warn partner to let the bid alone, as the hand cannot be played to advantage on any other call, or else its bidder expects to

go game. Higher suit bids still more emphatically request partner not to meddle.

One-No Trump bids, more than all others combined, differ with the individual player. They may mean anything from a mere suspicion of strength in two suits up to a slam hand. If you can win at least three more tricks on an attacking hand in royals or hearts, or, with a partner who never bids very weak no trumps, four more tricks on such a hand in diamonds or clubs than you can assist at no trumps, it is best to bid Two in your suit over your partner's 1-No Trump. If his no trump is weak, you have saved the situation; if he is strong you can go game as surely as he can.

### OTHER ORIGINAL BIDS

Estimate "free bids" (2-Spades over 1-Spade; 1-Club over 1-Spade or 2-Spades; 1-Diamond over 1-Spade or 2-Spades or 1-Club; 1-Heart over any bid of less than 8 points; 1-Royal or 1-No Trump over any lesser call)—by any bidder, subsequent to the dealer—as if made on the opening bid.

Bids of Two or Three are also free bids whenever a lower bid in the suit named would have cleared all previous bids (2-Clubs over 1-Spade; 3-Diamonds over 2-Clubs, etc.).

Bids of Two or Three to beat a previous bid (as 3-Spades over 1-Club; 2-Clubs over 1-Heart) must be viewed as "forced bids," and calculated as showing the same strength as a free bid of one less trick. If made over informatory bids, they are classed as informatory, but must show a willingness to be left in if made over business bids.

Illustrations follow of proper opening bids.

<i>Bid</i>	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
1-Spade	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 8-3 \\ Q-10-9-4 \end{array} \right\}$	K-J-7-4 10-9-8	Q-5 10-8-5	A-10-9-6-4 K-Q-3
2-Spades	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 8-7-5 \\ 8-7-6-2 \end{array} \right\}$	A-K-4 A-9	J-9-6-3 10-9-6	A-6-2 K-Q-J-4
3-Spades	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 10-9-5-3 \\ 6-4-3-2 \end{array} \right\}$	J-6-3-2 A-K-Q	A-K 9-7-5-4	A-K-Q A-K
$\infty$ 1-Club	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} K-8 \\ J-6-4 \end{array} \right\}$	A-K-8-3-2 K-Q-7	K-J-2 A-K-6-2	10-7-6 9-8-3
2-Clubs	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 10-7 \\ 10 \end{array} \right\}$	Q-10-9-8-6-5-3-2 A-K-Q-J-10-8-4	9-2 A-3	10 J-9-4
3-Clubs	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} K-6 \\ A-4 \end{array} \right\}$	A-K-J-7-6-4-3-2 A-J-10-8-7-5-4-3-2	— 5	J-7-5 2
1-Diamond	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 7-2 \\ A-J-9 \end{array} \right\}$	K-10-8-5 10-9-6	A-J-10-9-8-1 A-K-7	6 10-8-7-4

<i>Bid</i>	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
2-Diamonds ∞	{ <sup>4</sup> K-7-5	A-K-9-5 5-4	A-Q-10-9-8-4-3 A-K-10-9-7-5-3-2	Q —
1-Heart	{ A-Q-J-10-3 K-10-8-7-5-4-3	J-10-7-2 Q-J-9	A-10-7 Q-10	<sup>3</sup> J
2-Hearts	{ Q-J-10-9-7-6-5-4-2 K-Q-10-8-7-6-4-3	8-5 K-9-6	6-2 J	— 4
1-Royal ∞	{ K-Q-J-6 —	10-7-2 K-Q-J-3	<sup>5</sup> K-Q-7-5	A-10-9-4-3 Q-J-8-6-2
2-Royals	{ <sup>7</sup> J-8-4	Q-5 A-K	Q-6 7-5	A-K-Q-J-9-8-5-4 A-Q-J-10-6-3
1-No Trump	{ A-K-10 10-6	K-Q-6 A-K-Q-6-3-2	K-Q-J-7 A-8	A-Q-5 K-6-4
2-No Trumps	{ A-K K-Q-J	A-K-Q-J-8-7-3 A-K-Q	K-Q A-K-7	K-Q A-Q-J-10

Opening bids of 3-Diamonds, 3-Hearts, or 3-Royals can be made on the same strength as on opening bids of 3-Clubs.

## DETAILS:

### OPENING BIDS

#### SPADES

#### *1-Spade Bid*

Ordinarily shows a hand incapable of either an informatory or supporting bid. It must be viewed as a protective bid, which desires the advantage of a limited loss if left in. It may denote a wholly impotent hand, like No. 1, or one capable of giving the average assistance of 2 tricks, like No. 2. On a particular declaration (say Clubs) it may be capable of a supporting bid, like No. 3. It may denote a hand lacking general assisting cards (aces and kings), but capable of a red bid on the second round on length of suit, like No. 4. It is better to bid 1-Heart on such a hand, and go Two if partner bids No Trump.

	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
No. 1	9-7-6-4	10-8-3	8-4-3	8-7-2
No. 2	8-5-2	J-6-4	A-5-2	A-8-6-3
No. 3	6-4-3-2	J-10-9-7-5	————	J-8-5-2
No. 4	J-10-9-7-6-5-3-2	Q-8	10-4	8

Just because a prudent partner has bid 1-Spade should not prevent your giving a strong informatory bid, although the chances are greatly against his being able to give a later business bid. Weak no trumps

should be avoided, however, as it is almost certain that he cannot assist much on that call.

### *2-Spade Bid*

An informatory bid, showing assistance probably worth at least 3 tricks at no trumps, or at any trump declaration, provided the declarer has a trump suit sufficiently long to exhaust opponents. The bid shows the spade suit stopped by either the ace, or king and queen, or king, jack, and 10, or queen, jack, and 10. The chances in 10,000 to hold each are:

Ace, 2,500; K-Q, 588; K-J-10, 129; Q-J-10, 129—Total  
3,346

### *3-Spade Bid*

An informatory bid showing that suit surely stopped, as above, and cards probably worth at least 5 tricks. This bid cannot be made on a long set-up suit without outside cards, since 1-Royal would be its proper bid. It indicates two short solid suits.

## CLUBS

### *1-Club Bid*

Either an informatory bid, showing that suit stopped, and general assistance of 3 tricks, similar to the 2-Spade bid, or else a low business bid.

### *2-Club Bid*

Always a business bid, showing a hand good for at least 6 tricks, and probably more. It shows a hand worth 6 tricks at clubs and otherwise worthless, or

else it shows a hand probably capable of going game. In either event no ordinary hand justifies a partner in changing the bid.

### *3-Club Bid*

A business bid, showing an intention to play the hand at clubs. At any score it may show a hand worth at least 8 tricks at clubs and otherwise worthless. At a score of 12 or more it may show a hand worth 8 tricks at clubs, regardless of its value on other calls. At a score lower than 12 it may show a hand worth 9 tricks at clubs, whether or not it can assist another call.

## DIAMONDS

### *1-Diamond Bid*

Informatory or weak business bid, similar to 1-Club; neither the diamond nor the club suit permits of differentiating between a value of 3 and 5 probable tricks.

### *2-Diamond Bid*

A business bid, showing a hand worth at least 6 tricks on that call, similar to the 2-Club bid. As the strength may lie largely in low trumps, it is unwise to take out a partner from a shut-out bid unless your hand is surely worth 6 hearts or 7 clubs, and not worth 2 tricks at diamonds. If the hand can help on another bid to the extent of 3 tricks, this bid should not be made with less than 7 sure tricks at diamonds unless the score is 16 or more.

### *3-Diamond Bid*

A shut-out bid showing at least 8 tricks at diamonds. Made to cut off opposing bids, also to warn partner

not to interfere, except on a certainty of something better. If successful, it can go game from a score of 9 or more.

## HEARTS

### *1-Heart Bid*

Generally indicates sufficient strength to win the odd with ordinary assistance from partner, if left in, and also high cards which will be useful on another call if taken out.

Sometimes it is made on a hand like this:

Hearts, K-J-10-7-5-4; Clubs, —; Diamonds, 10; Spades, A-J-10-8-6-3.

This hand is equally good at either hearts or royals, but the bid is made in the lower suit to enable partner to bid the higher suit if he can. If an adversary should venture much on the royal suit, an excellent opportunity to double would be afforded.

If the dealer bids 1-Club, your partner's second-hand bid of 1-Heart may be made on a hand lacking only a stop to the clubs to bid 1-No Trump, as follows:

Hearts, A-Q-J-9; Clubs, 6-2; Diamonds, K-J-8; Spades, K-10-9-7.

The hand is rather weak, and scarcely sufficiently evenly divided in suit lengths to risk 1-No Trump.

Much experience at the table with sound bidders, and a partner who closely observes the conventions in bidding, are necessary to interpret correctly the later bids made, as the bidding goes around the table.

Under ordinary conditions the dealer's (or other player's) opening bid should never be made, as is

frequently the case, on hands in the heart suit like these:

A-K-Q-X, and no side-suit strength

A-K-X-X, with 1 outside trick

Q-X-X-X-X, without side strength—

because they do not possess both ability to win the odd if left in, and more than ordinary assistance to partner's make if taken out.

The following heart holdings warrant bids of One:

A-K-Q-X-X, without other strength

A-K-Q-X, with an outside trick

A-K-X-X, with 2 outside tricks and opponents bidding the unguarded suit.

K-Q-X-X-X, without other strength—

because they either show hands upon which higher heart bids can be ventured if necessary or else they show the regulation hands, able to probably win the bid if left in, and offering better than ordinary help on partner's bid.

One-Heart bids may also show hands like these:

	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
No. 1	A-K-Q-J-10-6	Q-3-2	K-10-8	A
No. 2	A-J-8-6-5-3-2	J-9-4	————	9-7-5
No. 3	Q-10-9-7-6-4-3	Q-5	9-3-2	8

No. 1 has fine help for no trumps, but hearts is safer, carries an honor score of 80 points, and requires only one more trick to go game. Nos. 2 and 3 will have to go 2-Hearts over partner's no trumps if bid. It is ordinarily as well either to bid Two originally or else pass. The bid of 1-trick often causes misunderstanding and consequent bad feeling.

### *2-Heart Bid*

A shut-out bid like 2-Diamonds.

### *3-Heart Bid*

Very rarely advisable to make unless a hand holds 9 sure tricks, which is almost out of the question. Two-Heart bids are sufficiently high. If made, it shows at least 8 tricks on that call.

## ROYALS

### *1-Royal Bid*

Always means business (the informatory bid would be 2-Spades), but does not prohibit partner from bidding 1-No Trump, or another suit better adapted to his hand. A bid of 1-Royal shows a minimum ability to win 4 tricks and a maximum strength of 6 tricks, except in cases where a hand is also adapted to no trumps and its possessor is looking for a chance to "boost" and double another player. Ordinarily, the ability to win 7 sure tricks at royals obligates an opening bid of Two.

### *2-Royal Bid*

A shut-out bid, like 2-Hearts, 2-Diamonds, or 2-Clubs.

### *3-Royal Bid*

Only used in rare cases where some such circumstance as a void suit renders it desirable to put a stop to all bidding before the adversaries can exchange information if the hand can go game.

On a hand like this 3-Royals had better be bid at once:

Hearts, 8; Clubs, 6-4-2; Diamonds, —; Spades, K-Q-J-9-8-6-5-3-2.

The hand is liable to be worthless at no trumps. If adversaries happen to hold powerful red hands the bidding may soar to Five or Six, unless you open with a high shut-out bid.

## NO TRUMPS

### *1-No Trump Bid*

This business bid shows a hand which cannot go game on any trump make without more than ordinary assistance from partner. It probably has no very long suit, and its strength is either scattered through three or four suits or lies mainly in clubs or diamonds. If those suits are good for six or seven tricks, it may have no royal or heart strength, especially if one of them is a set-up suit, like these:

	<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
No. 1	9-6	A-K-Q-J-8	A-K-J-4	J-7
No. 2	10-9-7	A-Q-J	A-K-Q-J	8-4-3
No. 3	————	A-J-10-6	A-K-Q-6-5	J-7-3-2
No. 4	J-9-6-2	A-K-Q-J	K-Q-J	10-8

As an assisting hand to a trump call with plenty of trumps, your partner's bid of 1-No Trump should mean not less than 4 tricks' assistance at any ordinary state of the score.

## OTHER ORIGINAL BIDS

With the exception of the dealer, the players are never obliged to bid unless it best serves their purpose.

To correctly interpret their bids it is necessary to distinguish between free and forced bids. A free bid is one made in accordance with the cards held. A forced bid is one higher than cards demand, in order to outbid another player. A free bid is made whenever the only previous bids are lower than the normal bid for the hand in question. A free bid is open to a hand calling for a 1-Club bid only when the previous bid has been 1-Spade or 2-Spades. If the previous bid has been 3-Spades, 1-Diamond, or 1-Heart, you cannot bid 1-Club, but must choose between silence and a bid of 2-Clubs. This particular 2-Club bid is a forced bid—one probably higher than cards fully warrant. It may be purely a weak business bid, and should be interpreted by your partner as probably the equivalent of a 1-Club bid. All bids of a value equal to a forced bid in the suit named must be considered as probably forced bids. Thus 2-Diamonds over 2-Clubs or 1-No Trump must be interpreted as probably showing hands worth business bids of only 1-Diamond, but must never be taken as indicating only 1-Diamond informatory bids. A bid of 2-Spades over 1-Spade is always a free bid, because 1-Spade is purely from weakness and 2-Spades is the lowest bid used to show strength in that suit, although in most cases the double of 1-Spade is safer and should be preferred to bidding 2-Spades. It is an excellent plan to bid 2-Spades instead of doubling, only when you hold 4 spades, with high honors, in a hand lacking a minimum royal bid, but able to give unusual assistance on royals and the customary no-trump aid.

All bids, unless forced higher than normal by those

previously made, can be interpreted precisely as if they were opening bids, with the one exception of the no-trump bid. Except in an emergency, no trumps bid over a previous suit bid means that the no-trump hand can look out for the suit bid, or else it means a hand made up of nearly equal suit lengths, with very unusual strength in three suits. In any event, if a bid of 2-Hearts, 2-Diamonds, or 2-Clubs is made over a partner's no trumper, which was bid after that adverse suit had been named, you must assume that he has that suit cared for, and you can raise his no-trump bid if you can assist him with at least 3 tricks, even if you have nothing in the adverse suit. If you have already given an informatory bid showing 3 tricks, you cannot ordinarily raise the no-trump bid. If the score is bad, your partner has probably considered it in bidding no trumps, and must make his own allowances. It is unsafe for both of you to take long chances.

No trumps bid over two previous adverse suit bids must usually mean that a stop to both of them is held. If the score is bad on opponent's second game, it may mean that the no-trump bidder has only one of them surely stopped, but has a hand evenly divided as to suit lengths, and so assumes that no one has any very long suit. This is always a risky assumption, although the way the cards are ordinarily shuffled is apt to make all hands somewhat similar in suit lengths.

To be able to bid Two over an adverse bid of One in the same call requires a hand upon which you would have gone Two on the opening bid as dealer. A double of an informatory bid will answer as well as bidding

Two, if you merely want to show your partner that you have a suit stopped and a hand good for 3 tricks. Never make a forced bid over a bid in the same suit; you cannot bid 2-Clubs on a hand worth a probable 5 tricks over an adverse bid of 1-Club. If the adverse bid is business and your opponents cannot shift their bid to advantage, it is usually better to double them than to advance their bid. The double forces them to win more tricks than the advance would, although, on the other hand, the declarer's side can win one or two tricks more with the same cards than they could if you played dummy's cards in connection with your own as declarer. Unless great gain is to be seen through bidding Two over One or in doubling, it is better to remain silent, or to bid in another suit to induce your opponents to raise their bid.

Quite a common thing is to have an adverse no-trump bid before your chance to make that same bid comes. With an established suit it is often best to say nothing, if you can make the opening lead. It is generally foolish to double and let them escape to a strong suit. If strong especially in royals or hearts, you can bid a suit. If they go 2-No Trumps, you can then double, and run off your established suit. There are cases when it pays to bid 2-No Trumps over One, but these are rare. You may have a score of 10 and a no-trump hand almost certain to win two "odd" at a time when 1-No Trump is bid against you. It will then be better to bid 2-No Trumps than to sting opponents for a small score. A case sometimes arises when you cannot be certain of winning such an increased contract, but where you prefer the risk to letting opponents

probably go game and rubber. Ordinarily, you must have stops in every suit, and one established suit, to make sure of your bid when bidding 2-No Trumps over One. Here is such a hand:

Hearts, A-3; Clubs, K-Q; Diamonds, A-K-Q-J-10-7-3-2; Spades, A.

Perhaps the original bidder has held:

Hearts, K-Q-J; Clubs, A-J; Diamonds, 9-8-6; Spades, K-Q-J-10-9.

Of course you can go game on diamonds, but you can bid 2-No Trumps if you desire. If the long suit were royals or hearts instead of diamonds, it would be preferable to bid them. With the hand above, your best course would be to double 1-No Trump. If they play it, your score will be very high. If they shift to royals, you can go 2-No Trumps.

It is a duty to take your partner out of a losing make only when it can be done safely. It is best to leave an opponent in a cheap make, incapable of going game, whether he will win or lose, unless the advantage to you is clear in making a bid. Your opponents may have expected you to bid, and are lying low with big hands, ready to double you or to go no trump when you bid. If you refuse to bid and let them play the deal in spades, it will usually be best for you.

## PASSING

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

One great requisite to success is to pass whenever you cannot clearly see a reason for bidding. Bluff bids and doubles can accomplish little except against poor bidders. Do not bid and run the chance of being left in with a hopeless contract on your hands when you know that your partner is weak. Do not double a bid that suits you, unless your partner can use the information you convey, if the way is open for opponents to escape to a call less favorable to you.

### DETAILS:

A player's refusal to bid may arise from several causes:

1. Because he has a hand worth not over two tricks.
2. Because the previous bid best suits his hand. He may fear to double lest he drive its bidder to another and less favorable call.
3. The pass may show a long, low suit, which could not assist on another call. The hand may be rather weak to bid before his partner has been heard from, and he fears to bid on the first round, lest he should be left in and find that his partner has no help.

4. The pass may denote a hand containing very valuable assistance but without having a single suit absolutely stopped:

Hearts, K-10-3; Clubs, Q-J-6; Diamonds, K-J-8; Spades, Q-10-9-6.

It is true that the only practical absolute stops to a suit are: A, K-Q, K-J-10, Q-J-10. But there are various other stops which are almost as certain, which can be used in cases of emergency on first bids, or with even scores on any later bid in a suit not already called by an opponent, if the rest of the hand warrants it. The following combinations will nearly always stop a suit:

K-J-9, K-J-8-7, Q-J-8-7, K-10-9-7, Q-10-9-7-5.

It will certainly be a very unusual card distribution which will prevent such combinations from acting as stops. The great objection to many of them is that they cannot be depended upon to stop a suit quickly, and costly discards may have to be made by partner at no trumps, or re-entry may be lacking to utilize them.

These objections apply in a lesser degree to the use of Q-J-10 as a bidding stop. It permits two rounds to be run off before the suit can be stopped. On the other hand, if a bid is permissible only in a suit headed by A or K-Q or K-J-10, emergencies arise when such restriction causes hardship and loss. If players use judgment in their selection of the time to risk a little more than ordinary, there can be no harm in the long run in the use of the near stops as given above, especially those headed by the king. But, ordinarily, sticking to a good general rule (except in cases of real emergency)

pays better than occasional gains through departure from the rule, in the confidence your partner can put in your bids.

If your partner bids 1-No Trump and the next player bids 2-Hearts or 2-Diamonds, you can go 2-No Trumps on either an absolute or near stop to the adverse suit, provided the remainder of your hand contains at least two sure tricks in addition to the stop.

If your partner's no trump is topped by the player at your left and your partner declines to advance his bid, you should have an absolute stop to the adverse suit, also a minimum of two other sure tricks, or else you should have a near stop and more than two other sure tricks. A risk should always be compensated by a hope of extra gain. This small risk is worth an added trick, unless the score is bad. A larger risk demands still greater chances of gain. This rule of taking risks proportionate to possible gains is important to remember in various situations arising during the course of a game, such as risking a deep finesse to win the rubber, losing a trick on an even chance to win three later on, or even two when they mean saving the game.

5. A refusal to outbid a business bid can come from lack of sufficient strength to do so safely.

6. Failure to assist a partner may arise from weakness, or at no trumps it can come from inability to stop the adverse suit.

7. Declining to raise a partner's bid may come from a belief that opponents will be badly stung if allowed to stay in. In such a case the one declining to assist may have a good hand, but he may believe it better to try to set the other side.

## DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

Expert doubling conveys valuable information to partner, enables heavy scores to be made against unwise bidders, frightens timid players away from calls not wanted, and shows partner what suit to lead at no trumps.

Scientific redoubling likewise imparts valuable information to partner, heavily penalizes rash doubles, and scares inexperienced doublers into bidding instead of sticking to their doubles.

Both doubling and redoubling are very important features of the bidding contest, and should be thoroughly understood. Like all deadly weapons, they are dangerous in unskilled hands, and are most carefully used by those who best understand them.

There are four distinct varieties of doubles:

1. The "informatory double" of informatory bids is made to show a sure stop to the suit and 3 tricks' help to partner if he will make a business bid.
2. The "business double" is made when able to defeat a business bid.
3. The "bluff double" is merely intended to frighten the bidder into a call which the doubler really dreads less.

4. The "protective double" is part of "the club convention." It is a double of a no-trump bid by pone (player at declarer's right) when he holds a long set-up suit of clubs. It requests elder (player at declarer's left) to lead his highest club. This convention is fully discussed under "Conventional Plays," but is rarely employed unless an opening bid of 2-No Trumps or more has been made.

There are three different sorts of redouble:

1. The informatory redouble is made over an informatory double of spades to show partner that the redoubler has spades stopped and can assist his call to the extent of 3 tricks.

2. The business redouble is made when able to fulfil a doubled contract.

3. The bluff redouble is made to frighten the doubler or his partner so that one of them will believe that the double was a mistake, and will accordingly bid instead of letting the redouble stand.

Like the bluff bid, the bluff double and bluff redouble are more apt to do harm than good. They are sometimes the only hope of escape from a serious loss, but are very seldom effective against sound bidders.

The informatory double can be made by the second player, of the dealer's bid of 1-Spade or 2-Spades on about the same hand on which he would have given an informatory bid if he had dealt. It cannot safely be done with other opening bids, since the bid may be purely informatory, or it may be a business bid.

The only informatory redouble which can reasonably be made is when 1-Spade has been bid by a notoriously cautious dealer, and has been doubled. Then the third player can redouble, if he has practically a no-trump

hand to encourage the dealer to make it no trumps, if the latter is at all guarded in the remaining three suits.

Informatory doubles are useless under conditions prohibitive to informatory bids. It is useless, for example, to make this variety of double as fourth player, if the second player has passed, because the only object of this double is to show 3 tricks' assistance and a sure stop to the suit. The pass shows that your partner is not seeking help, but more probably is trusting that the weak bid will hold, because it could do less harm than anything else.

Except for information, it is folly to double a weak bid which cannot possibly go game. Even if you can defeat it, the double is senseless. The probable result is a change of call which you quite likely cannot defeat, and which may even lose you the game.

The business double should be made only when you believe that the joint cards of your partner and yourself can prevent the fulfilment of a contract, and at the same time when you believe that your opponents cannot escape to a better call. If the second player, for example, doubles an opening bid of 1-Club from great strength in that suit, having no help for a partner's no trump, he leaves open four other calls to which the bidder can escape. The second player's only hopes of success are either to remain silent or to bid 2-Clubs, according to just what he holds.

If your partner's bids and the cards you hold show that escape to a call less favorable to you is practically impossible, there are three things still to consider before doubling:

1. Whether you can surely defeat the contract.
2. If you can set the bidder back, will it pay you better than the best declaration open to you?
3. Unless you can surely set the contract, view the score to see whether your double will enable the bidder to go game if he wins, where he could not do so without your double.

A good general rule is not to double for business unless you can stand a redouble, either through strength in the call you double or because escape to another call is open to you if a redouble is made.

A double discloses where strength lies, and reduces the doubler's winning chances by an average of about one trick, by causing leads through his hand to be made instead of part of them going through his partner, provided both opponents are bidding on the same call, or provided the doubler sits at declarer's right.

If the declarer's partner has not bid, more especially if he has passed, a doubler sitting over the declarer can more freely count kings as sure tricks, trump tenaces as worth two tricks, medium-sized trumps as worth tricks, and so on. If the doubler sits at declarer's right, or if both opponents have bid, tricks must be counted in a very conservative manner. The former situation gives a favorable doubling position, the latter gives an unfavorable doubling position.

In a favorable doubling position it is sufficient to hold enough reasonably sure tricks to win all outside of what the contract calls for, thus depending upon your partner for a single trick if you have not heard from him. If your partner has given a bid showing three tricks, you can count two of them. It is dangerous to count three of them unless you play both

hands. If the bidding contest between your hand and the declarer's has been very keen, and your partner has steadily passed, you cannot count on him for even a single trick.

In an unfavorable doubling position at least one more trick than given above should be held by the doubler.

If you are doubled, unless your partner has bid, you must not expect even a single trick's assistance from him when you consider whether you shall redouble. If the only doubt about redoubling involves a single trick, it is best not to redouble, if winning it redoubled would not change your chances to go game. If you are certain to win within one of your contract, and see chances to win your contract, you can redouble if the added value of the redouble is needed to enable you to go game.

Always most carefully review your strength before redoubling; locate mentally where intermediate cards of tenaces probably lie, where the aces of your king suits are, whether side strength is apt to be ruffed; note suits that you can ruff on first or second rounds, the number of trumps against you, the chances that your partner holds a chicane hand, or a "bust."

In choosing between doubling with a certainty of winning at least 300, and continuing a safe bid certain to go game, the former is preferable, but game is usually to be preferred to anything short of the 300.

### DETAILS:

Always consider what a bid means before doubling it. The protective bid of 1-Spade is clear, so also is

the informatory bid of 2-Spades, but 1-Club or 1-Diamond may be a weak business bid. Bids of 1-Heart cannot be purely informatory, and it is unsafe to reckon them as meaning less than business. There are situations, where your partner appears to desire a no trump, when an informatory double of a weak business bid can be advantageously made on a sure stop, and a hand capable of a business bid in that suit, even if probably unable to sustain the double. If *sure* that a bluff bid has been made, a double can be given on a hand worth only an informatory bid. Never make even a bluff double on a weaker hand, as it will be almost certain to fool your partner.

To prudently double a 3-Spade bid usually calls for a no-trump hand. The bidder's spade suit cannot be long, or 1-Royal would have been bid. The strength must be divided between two short suits. An opening bid of 1-No Trump would have been made if the five promised tricks lay in three suits, or in clubs and diamonds.

If 3-Spades are bid by the second player over the dealer's opening bid of 1-Club, it may show a perfect no-trump hand outside of the dealer's suit, and may be worth far more than five tricks. It is then an invitation for partner to bid no trumps if he can stop the dealer's suit, otherwise to bid on his best suit. Four Spades can occasionally be bid over dealer's 1-Diamond or 1-Heart bid in similar manner; but 5-Spades bid over 1-Royal would indicate that the bidder could not stop that suit or he would bid 1-No Trump. Departures from the rule not to bid on a suit unless you hold a sure stop are both dangerous and confusing.

In any event, the 3-Spade bid undertakes to win all but four tricks if allowed to stand. If it is an opening bid it can be doubled on a sure stop, ability to win four tricks if played, and a hand able to win three tricks on other calls. If the 3-Spade bid has been made over partner's bid, showing three club tricks, it can be doubled on a sure stop and a hand good for three tricks. It is unwise to fool partner by doubling on less, although in the latter case it would be safe as far as being able to defeat a 3-Spade contract is concerned.

Two-Club bids like 2-Diamonds, 1-Heart, 1-Royal, and 1-No Trump always call for business doubles or none at all.

In most cases there is little in business doubles of bids lower than three. Three bids are sufficiently high, if made in high suits, to cut off safe escape, and are hard to win.

Do not double 1-No Trump on a set-up suit able to defeat it. At rare intervals you may hold a powerful no-trump hand, stopped in all suits, when the previous bidder goes 1-No Trump. Instead of bidding 2-No Trumps you can double (provided your partner understands it), as a request to bid his best call. Unless your partner has previously bid from some strength, or unless your own hand is certain to win 6 tricks if the double stands, the proceeding cannot be recommended.

Doubles of high-trump bids, which have risen step by step, both partners bidding, can be doubled largely on side strength, but high original bids show such long trump suits as to probably render side strength impotent.

I recently had a striking illustration of this latter point on the following hand:

Hearts, A; Clubs, A-K-J-10; Diamonds, Q-J-10-9-8-6-4-3; Spades, none.

I bid 3-Diamonds over 1-Heart. The next player went 3-Hearts, and my partner passed. I raised to 4-Diamonds, and so on until I had bid 5-Diamonds, when I was doubled. There were 2 in 3 chances that the queen of clubs either lay with my partner or on my right. There were also the chances that my partner could win a spade trick, and slight chance that he held the king of hearts or a missing honor in my suit. With only three tricks needed to defeat me, my opponents might be doubling on general principles. I took a sporting chance and redoubled. My partner held the queen of clubs, but absolutely nothing else of the least value. Spades were opened and ruffed; then I led trumps. The king of diamonds won, and hearts were led, through my ace. A second round of trumps and a ruff of their hearts left me in control, and the redoubled contract was won. The doubler had felt perfectly safe with the ace and king in his hand of both diamonds and spades, the diamonds absolutely certain of winning tricks, his partner bidding hearts, and clubs not located.

The side winning the first leg of the rubber has 3 in 4 chances to win the 250 honor points going with the rubber. If you lose the first game you have only 1 in 4 chances to win the rubber. That is, the loss or gain of each game deducts or adds to your chances of winning the rubber 1 in 4 chances. The average value of a rubber is 400 points; but the difference to a player

between winning and losing an average rubber is 800 points. Hence winning a game averages to be worth 200 points to you. Accordingly, winning anything over 200 honor points averages to be better than winning a game. This is true even on the rubber game.

Whenever you can set an opponent back 250 sure points or more, you should do so in preference to bidding on a hand capable of going game.

It is safer to double or redouble a player who sits on your right than one sitting over you at your left.

Do not double or redouble, even on a certainty, when there is a probable loophole for escape into another call less favorable to you.

On the rubber game, in particular, doubling and redoubling, except on certainties, should be made to score.

A "free double" is when the bidder will win game on the undoubled contract. Somewhat greater liberties can be taken on a double under such conditions.

It is proper to take your partner out of an informatory bid at any time. If he has been doubled, you can do so on a rather light hand. It is also right to take your partner out of an informatory double which has been redoubled, at considerable risk. It is not right to take a prudent partner out of a business bid which has been doubled, nor out of a redouble of his business double, unless you have almost a certainty of a better make and a game score to offer as a substitute.

In questions of bid, double, and redouble the reliability of the player himself has to be considered. Bluff in such matters often pays with many players: it occasionally pays with most players; it very rarely

indeed pays with really scientific bidders, because the latter stick to their system of bidding so closely (score emergency and personality of opponents duly credited) that they depend upon what they see in their own hand and upon what partner tells them, instead of being swayed by their opponents' acts. Against such players the bluffer has more chance of being hurt than he has of working his bluff.

The personal equation enters largely into most Auction problems. You must be extra conservative with a partner who overbids his hand, discounting the strength which he announces and concealing a part of your own. A player who persists in raising his partner's bid on the strength of only one or two probable tricks is a nuisance and menace at any card-table. A bidder who habitually opens with 1-No Trump bids, whether he has or has not a hand worth his bid, with the idea of shutting out others from that bid makes a most unsatisfactory candidate either as a partner or as an opponent. His partner can never tell whether to support his bid or to try and take him out. At one time his partner is blamed for not taking him out on a semblance of a bid, and the next time fault is found because he is taken out on a strong suit.

When playing with reckless bidders it is best, whenever possible, to shut out "piker calls" (weak bids and questionable doubles) by an original high bid.

Some players dislike yielding a contract to another bidder. Against such players it is best to start with as high a bid as your hand allows, to try and shut them out from the start. If they once start bidding, it is legitimate to bid higher than ordinary against them,

as they are almost certain to overbid their hands, so that they can frequently be stung.

“Bucket-shop bids” (those made regardless of probabilities, depending upon the player’s luck for success) and “policy-shop doubles” (where the doubler has dreamed the bid to which it will drive the one doubled), like other forms of pure gambling, sometimes win. The odds are all against their votaries, however, who are certain to lose in the long run.

## SCORE AND HONOR VALUES

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

It is unjustifiable to take even a slight risk to prevent opponents from winning a contract which is incapable of going game. You have nearly as good chances to win the game from "love" as they have from 28.

It is better to lose 50 points (or even 100 if doubled) than to let opponents have the contract, if they can probably win the game. Unless the loss of the rubber is involved, the bidder of a losing contract must be tolerably sure of going within one trick of his bid. On the rubber game he can sometimes afford to risk a double on a *possible* loss of two tricks rather than surrender a reasonable hope of winning the rubber. The reliability of the other players' bids, and whether opponents are prompt to double overbids, have to be considered in risking set-backs. The proper system is for the original bidder of a suit to assume all responsibility for overbidding, and for his partner to stick to the rules prescribed for raising bids. If both players sometimes overbid a trick or two, and again both are too conservative, they will undertake impossible contracts,

and fail to gain contracts when their hands warrant higher bids.

Honor points must never be allowed anything like the consideration due them at Bridge.

### DETAILS:

The idea is to bid on the call best supported by the joint hands. If no very appreciable choice exists between two calls, it is proper to consider which best fits the score. It is absurd to consider the score when one call is decidedly the best for a hand.

The danger score at Auction lies at a point on the rubber game where three tricks on the call opponents bid will carry them out. With reasonable opposition they cannot well make over three tricks, even with the declarer's advantage of playing two hands.

Intermediate scores have some value. A winning declaration which does not go game has, however, little to its credit beyond the fact that it has not allowed the other side to score, and sometimes two successive small scores for the same side win a game. It is always better to win a safe contract, even on spades at love, than to allow your opponents to do so; but it is unjustifiable to run any slight risk for the sake of a small score when opponents are bidding on a call which cannot possibly go game.

At a score when either can go game, a strong trump call is preferable to a strong one without trumps, but a dubious no trump is better than a risky one at trumps, because your partner's hand is more apt to be useful at no trumps than on one special suit.

Occasionally a hand is unbeatable at either of two alternative makes. I recently held the following hand, and selected hearts in preference to no trumps:

<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
A-K-Q-J-10-9-8-5-3	A	A	K-Q

Either call was unbeatable, but the heart call assured a higher total score on account of 5 honors in one hand.

“Hazards” (honors, chicane, little slam, and slam) have smaller influence over the score at Auction than they had at Bridge. In Auction you cannot often afford to consider the relative values of honors in choosing between two possible bids, unless both can go game, or unless neither can possibly go game. No honor value from cards held on one call can fully compensate you for a failure to win the game on another call. At a love score 4 by cards at royals or hearts, thus winning the game and simple honors, is better than winning 2 by cards at no trumps with 100 honor score for 4 aces in one hand. If two calls are capable of going game, select the one offering the greatest total score, unless at an added risk.

The honor values complicate score-keeping, which should be made as simple as possible, both to insure accuracy and because the score-keeper's task is a thankless one. There appears to be no good reason why a player should be rewarded for his luck in having honors dealt to him. His reward should come through his knowledge of bidding and his skill in making his cards win tricks.

In the earlier days of Whist honors had a value in

game points. As the game developed honor scoring was eliminated. At Bridge the honor values were restored to compensate a player who declared in a way unsuited to the joint hands of himself and partner. The declaration could not be changed, although a heavy loss might occur.

At Auction a bid can be changed if it does not suit the bidder's partner. No player outside of the dealer is forced to bid, while the dealer is liable only for a limited loss if he bids 1-Spade on a weak hand. Accordingly, no compensative honor value is required by any one in event of a loss.

A player holding 4 aces at no trumps is able to win 4 tricks with them. That is enough. It is absurd also to hand him 100 honor points because he is dealt 4 aces.

A hand worth at the outside a bid of 2-Royals should not be bid up to 4-Royals merely because it contains five honors which are worth 90 points. It is unfair to a player who has a hand worth a bid of 4-Hearts to be outbid by another hand merely on its honor value. If the bidder of 4-Royals loses 100 for 2 tricks down, and wins 90 for 5 honors, it is an encouragement to overbidding.

In reality, nothing is more uninteresting than a game where set-backs are common. It is especially so if the overbidder is only slightly penalized.

Wherever the system has been tried of omitting honor scores for cards dealt a player, the removal of temptation to overbid because of honor values has improved the game, while the score has been simplified. It is to be hoped that the laws in the near future will remedy their one apparent defect.

## LEAD TO PARTNER'S STRENGTH

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

Your partner shows strength if he bids anything higher than 1-Spade, or if he doubles.

The proper opening leads for cases where partner fails to disclose strength will be found under "Trump Leads" and "No Trump Leads."

When your partner has given an informatory bid, you can ordinarily expect three tricks from his hand if you are the declarer. With an adverse trump declaration it is safer to count his hand as probably worth only two tricks. On adverse no trump calls you can count your partner's hand at full value if you hold assistance in his suit. On either trump or no-trump declaration you should ordinarily open your partner's suit.

Lead your highest card of your partner's suit to him at no trumps, unless you have shown strength in his suit by raising his bid, and even then unless you hold four or more of his suit. In the latter case, open his suit as described under "No Trump Leads," in order best to show him what you hold. With 4 or more cards of a suit it is likely that you really have its

greatest strength, in addition to which it is desirable to have part of its strength preserved on declarer's left, to enable your partner to lead through the declarer's hand up to your strength.

At trumps it is useless to show your length of suit, so your opening lead, regardless of suit length, should be the highest card of your partner's suit.

The objects of leading your highest card at no trumps are to clear your partner's suit before he loses his re-entry, to try to catch high adverse cards, and to disclose to your partner where the outstanding high cards of his suit lie.

A most excellent reason for not leading the suit upon which your partner has bid should be had. Many games are lost by attempts to be smart and pull off a coup in another suit.

If you hold both ace and king of another suit, you should lead the king before opening your partner's suit; then keep back the ace and open his suit. The king lead shows him you hold the ace so he can put you in later. This play holds good whether he has bid or shown strength by doubling.

If you have a set-up suit, or re-entry and a suit which can be set-up with a single lead (like A-Q-J-10-X or K-Q-J-10-X or K-Q-J-X-X-X), it is better to open it than your partner's suit at no trumps. It is most unlikely that the declarer would risk two such adverse suits, and consequently your suit is undoubtedly better to open than your partner's.

If your partner has both bid and doubled, nothing but the possession of a set-up suit or the lack of one of your partner's suit can justify your first leading

your own suit, with the exception of a single preliminary lead of the king, to show him you have an ace to which he can lead.

If your partner doubles a trump call without first showing his own suit, do not lead trumps. If you have bid on a suit, start leading it. If you have not bid on a suit, open with the king from ace and king, if you have them, to view dummy to try and discover what is wanted led. If you lack such a suit, open the best one you have. If you have no choice between your suits, lead a low suit in preference to a higher one—that is, clubs in preference to hearts, for example.

Open a strengthless suit with its top card to show your partner the highest card you hold in the suit. "Strengthening leads," or "supporting cards," as they are sometimes called, are unlikely to win tricks if held back, but sometimes they force high cards from opponents, or save your partner from playing a high card which may later win a trick. J, 10, 9, and incompletely guarded queen are strengthening cards. Your partner, after seeing you lead a jack or 10 from the top of a suit, can usually place enough other higher cards to see that you have given him a "top-of-nothing lead."

A "yarborough" (or "bust") is an original hand containing nothing higher than the 9, and no suit of over five cards. The opening lead of the 9 or 8 from such a worthless hand is one way of warning him not to depend at all upon you. Throwing away all your cards of his suit at no trumps (provided they are worthless) means, "Partner, I have no possible re-entry in my hand, and cannot win a single trick." A hand has to

be extremely bad, however, to be certain that it cannot win a trick.

If your partner doubles no trumps without previously having bid, lead him your highest club, unless he has previously notified you that on a third-hand double he desires some other course pursued. This is known as the "club convention."

### DETAILS:

At Auction the opening lead can never be made through the declarer's strength, as it can on a passed make at Bridge; but if dummy has bid on a side suit a lead can be made through his strength, if nothing better can be done. The leader also frequently knows what his partner wants led.

Partner's 1-Spade bid merely shows lack of a suit surely stopped and three general tricks in hand. He may have a suit surely stopped, or three general tricks, or a long and low suit suitable for a second-round bid. One-Spade bids do not necessarily show utter weakness, but warn you to depend almost entirely upon your own strength for the success of your plans.

Partner may have great strength in a suit which he cannot disclose if a previous high bid is made. A 2-Club bid would prevent his showing a 3-Spade hand, or a suit worth a single bid in red. Any business bid cuts off all informatory bids, also lower business bids. At Bridge you sought partner's strength mainly in higher suits than the trump suit. In Auction you reverse the process by looking for partner's strength to lie chiefly in suits cut off from bidding.

One reason for ordinarily preferring to open your partner's suit in preference to your own is that it is easier to establish a suit by leading up to it than by leading away from it. This is especially true when it happens that dummy has doubled or has gone over your partner's bid.

It is true that even at trumps it would sometimes be better to open low, when you hold several of your partner's suit, than to lead the highest card of his suit. The gains and losses from such procedure are, however, about equal to those from always leading the highest card of his suit. Unless you always lead your highest card at trumps, and at no trumps, when you have not raised his bid because you hold over three of his suit, he cannot always be certain what your lead means. If you lead the 6 from K-9-8-6 he will often mistake it for the top card you hold. If he wins the first trick with the ace from A-J-10-7-5, when dummy shows only 4-2, your partner is apt to place both king and queen with the declarer and abandon the suit instead of allowing your king to win the next trick.

In some circles it is customary always to open the suit upon which you have bid if your partner has remained silent. Such an arbitrary rule is not wise to follow, as the declarer has probably looked out for means of stopping your declared strength, while he may be unprepared to stop another equally strong suit. The unexpected lead is most apt to catch him napping. The strength must, of course, lie in your own hand. It is not safe to lead a weak suit merely on the chance that your partner can carry it on, especially if he has bid 1-Spade or has passed.

The "club convention" is now quite generally understood. Its full details will be found under "Conventional Plays."

A rather unique situation sometimes presents itself where a singleton lead can be very advantageously made before you open your partner's suit. Say partner's 2-Club bid has been overcalled with 2-Hearts at a time when your hand is like this:

<i>Hearts</i>	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>	
A-4-3	9-6-5-3	8	K-J-9-7-4	or
K-Q-5-2	J-7-4	J-10-6-3-2	4	

In the first case lead your singleton diamond, and in the second case lead your only spade. The supporting 8 may be judged to be from the top of a suit because you have no club to lead. The low spade will surely give the thing away if the declarer has the high spades, or if they appear in the exposed hand of dummy. If your partner happens to have the ace and wins the first trick, you have done no harm, and unless his club suit is set up he will doubtless return your lead. Probably the declarer will win the first trick and start leading trumps. In the first hand you will immediately stop him with the ace. In the second case you will win either his first or second lead with the queen. As soon as you have won, you will open your partner's club suit, which he is almost sure to win with the ace. Then he will return your short suit and let you ruff. You again lead clubs, and he again lets you ruff. In this way you can utilize one or two small trumps which otherwise would never win a trick. If your partner's clubs are not fully set up, the scheme may fail, but it

is well worth a try. Ordinarily, singletons should not be led on your partner's double, or if he has shown strength by bidding, unless they are aces. This particular card distribution makes it the best possible lead at trumps, provided your partner has a solid suit, or sits over dummy's honors in that suit.

As a rule, it is best not to open your own strong suit, if it has been bid by an opponent before you had the chance to do so yourself, or if your bid has been doubled, unless your partner has not disclosed his suit.

If a bid sufficiently high to win is made before your partner has had a chance to show his suit, a situation arises which is precisely similar to ordinary Bridge, and the game must be played in exactly the same way in most respects. You know merely that your partner cannot, or deems it most profitable not to either raise the bid or to double.

## TRUMP LEADS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

At trumps your best course as side player ordinarily is to win tricks with your strong cards of plain suits before the declarer can make discards and ruff. Also to utilize a weak trump suit in ruffs before trumps are led.

A marked difference in the "blind" (or opening) lead exists between trumps and no trumps. At trumps the proper lead varies from the normal if your partner doubles or if he has bid.

There are six general varieties of openings at trumps:

1. Leading from a sequence of high cards, or from 3 honors, as king from A-K and K-Q, or 10 from K-J-10.
2. A strengthening lead, queen, jack, 10, or 9, as the top of a suit.
3. Leading a singleton, except the king. This latter card is never led unless accompanied by ace or queen.
4. Long-suit openings.
5. Low-card leads from short suits.
6. Trump attack.

Honor leads, either from long or short suits, are generally the most efficacious. The lead of a winning

honor other than the ace can rarely be criticized. An opening lead of the king from A-K, especially if the suit is short, is always good, as it enables you to view dummy's hand before deciding what to do next, without losing control of your opening suit.

A strengthening card lead serves a double purpose: it may draw a winning card from dummy or save one from playing a valuable high card. It also shows your partner that you have no higher card in the suit to which he can lead. It rarely does harm, and may greatly assist your partner. A strengthening card is probably useless for you to hold, and forms an important feature of the defensive tactics required by a weak hand, or by one holding tenaces up to which leads are desired.

A singleton ace is always a fine opening if you wish to ruff that suit. Singleton queen, jack, 10, or 9 is apt to prove a disappointing lead, as it will probably be mistaken for a strengthening card, and your partner will not return the suit for you to ruff. The lower the singleton the more apt you will be to secure the desired ruff. Opportunities to trump should not be sought if you hold the "blank" ace of trumps, two trumps headed by king, three to the queen, four to the jack, four like 10-9-8-7, or five of any denomination. The one exception to the rule not to ruff when holding a guarded trump honor is when dummy is over all your trumps, so that they are worthless except for ruffing. With six trumps or over you can seek a ruff.

Long-suit openings, to be effective beyond short-suit openings, with equal top cards in both cases, must be when your hand is suitable for offensive tactics,

having strong trump support, or else abundant re-entry in the other two plain suits. In either of these cases the long suit can be established, and used to force the declarer to ruff until his hand is exhausted.

The lead of a card lower than the 8 ordinarily requests a return of the suit, if your partner has not bid on it. If you do not want it returned, refrain from low-card leads if you have another suitable lead of an honor, a strengthening card, or, in some cases, a trump.

Trump attack can be advantageously made only under certain conditions. It is proper with a doubling hand, one strong in trumps, with either a powerful side suit or with scattered high cards of plain suits. Do not lead your partner a trump if he has doubled, unless your hand is strong in trumps, or unless it has some trump strength and can also render outside help.

Holding nothing in plain suits, you can commence a trump attack from a sequence of high trumps, as A-K, K-Q-J, K-Q, or Q-J-10. This will pull trumps out of your weak opponent, and prevent his ruffing. It may so reduce the declarer's hand as to enable your partner to get in a long plain suit without being ruffed.

When a declaration is undoubled, and your partner has shown no suit, if you have to make the opening lead from a hand not warranting trump attack, the following table shows, arranged in order of their average desirability, the plain suits from which leads should be made.

In the table "X" signifies any card of a lower denomination than that specifically called for by the preceding letter. Thus A-K-Q-X means: ace, king, queen, and any fourth card from jack down to deuce.

## OPENING LEADS AT TRUMPS

Class 1	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-K \\ A-K-Q \\ A-K-X \\ A-K-Q-X \\ A-K-X-X \end{array} \right\}$	More than 3 out of 4 times these suits will win the first two tricks, because neither opponent can ruff. They give even chances to win the third trick; with the queen, if dummy has just three of the suit; otherwise by opening a new suit of which dummy lacks the ace.
Class 2	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-K-Q-X-X \\ A-K-X-X-X \\ A-K-Q-X-X-X \\ A-K-X-X-X-X \end{array} \right\}$	These suits are more apt to be ruffed on first or second rounds, but give even chances of winning three straight tricks by opening a new suit on the third lead.
Class 3	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A \text{ only} \end{array} \right\}$	Gives practically a certain trick with an opportunity to discover from dummy's hand what partner probably most desires led.
Class 4	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} K-Q \\ K-Q-J \\ K-Q-X \\ K-Q-J-10 \\ K-Q-J-X \\ K-Q-X-X \\ K-Q-J-X-X \\ K-Q-X-X-X \end{array} \right\}$	Such suits offer 1 in 3 chances of finding the ace with pone. In any event, the command of the suit is retained, even if the first trick is lost.
Class 5	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Singletons lower than king} \\ \text{Sequences to Q, J, 10 or 9} \\ \text{Doubletons to Q, J, 10 or 9} \\ \text{Long low suits} \\ \text{Short low suits} \end{array} \right\}$	Offer 1 in 3 chances that pone can win the first trick, but do not retain the suit command.

A-Q-10, A-J-10, and K-J-10, with or without smaller cards, are powerful when led up to, but are bad to open on the blind lead. If the missing honors lie with dummy they can be opened later, since he can evade your strength, regardless of how the lead comes. If the missing honors lie with declarer a gain comes through some one else opening the suit.

For similar reasons all tenaces and combinations of two honors not in sequence are bad to open blindly; as: A-Q, A-J, K-J, K-10, Q-10. So also are suits of low cards headed by a single honor. If the ace is led from a low suit you catch only the lowest card each player has, but when some one else opens the suit a high honor is apt to be killed, possibly

greatly to your partner's benefit. Three-card suits, unless containing a high sequence, also 2-card suits, without a high top card, are useless to open on your own account, and may cause your partner to lose a high honor, perhaps the king, which otherwise would have won a trick.

The proper card to play from a given combination not only must be the one giving the best chances to win the maximum, but also it must be selected with reference to giving all possible information to you partner. If you hold both ace and king, it is evident that you will as surely win the first trick whether the ace or the king is led, but if you play them in ascending order (king, ace) it means you have at least one more card; while playing them in reverse order (ace, king) means that your suit holds only the doubleton. Similar differences in the play of other combinations will convey wholly different meanings to a skilled player.

As a suit averages only two rounds before some one can ruff, it is useless to vary your leads at trumps to show 4 cards of a suit; but use the "third-round call" whenever possible, as explained later on.

The ace lead shows either a suit composed only of itself and the king or else a suit of any length which lacks the king. It denies holding the king with any other card.

The king lead always means that the ace or the queen, or both, are also held. It denies holding the doubleton ace. A singleton king is never led, as it stands better chances of winning if some one else leads.

The queen opening denies having either the ace or the

king. It is led from a suit of any length containing the jack. It is also led from a doubleton, regardless of what the second card may be, also when singleton.

Jack leads deny holding a higher card of the suit. It is led from J-10-9, regardless of suit length, from J-10 with one or two others, also as the top of any doubleton, and as a singleton.

The 10 is led from K-J-10 combinations, but otherwise denies the possession of ace, king, queen, or jack. It is led as the top of a sequence of any length, as a doubleton with any lower card, also as a singleton.

The 9 is led only as the top of a sequence of any length, as a doubleton with any lower card, and as a singleton.

Any card lower than the 9 should indicate a hope ultimately to win something in the suit led, although the 8 is a dubious card, possibly top of a very low sequence. Never unnecessarily lead a very low card from a suit unless you can ruff the second round or hold possible tricks in high cards.

Reserve very low card leads for "come-on," and try to help your partner with a strengthening lead if all else fails. Ability to read a partner's cards is worth more tricks than will be lost through making your leads intelligible.

### DETAILS:

If you open with a winning card so that you view dummy's hand seeking a favorable suit to open, remember that it is folly to lead through too great

strength (like ace-king), but proper to lead through any suit having a high missing card or two (like ace-queen, or king-jack). In the latter case your partner may win two tricks with the ace-queen if you lead through dummy; but your partner can win only a single trick with the same cards if he is obliged to lead up to dummy's strength. Any tenace, or fourchette, shown by dummy (unless you hold the missing intermediate card) offers a good suit through which to lead.

King and low cards in dummy offers another good suit to open. If your partner holds the ace and queen of the suit, he can win with both of them, whereas he could not do so if he were forced to open it. A suit in dummy's hand suitable for opening on the blind lead is useless to lead through. Thus K-Q-J-X is not good to lead through, as it is a good opening suit; but A-X-X-X is not bad to lead through. The ace is bound to win sooner or later. By letting it win at once you are perhaps clearing the way for your partner to win the next trick or two with the king and queen.

Some players having a singleton and also an ace (or an ace and king) always lead the winning card first, to be certain that dummy does not hold the ace of their singleton suit. Other players maintain that a singleton should always be used as an opening lead, because it cannot be recognized that a ruff is sought unless the singleton opens the hand. The other side of the question is that your partner has only one chance in three of holding the ace of your singleton suit. If you wait until you see that dummy does not hold the dreaded ace, you know that even chances exist, whether it is held by pone or declarer.

The lead of an ace, followed by a change of suit, may mean:

1. That the king is still held singly to afford the pone a safe return lead in case he desires another lead through dummy.
2. That the king is still held, and, since neither the queen nor the jack appear in dummy's three cards, that a return lead through the declarer may result in the capture of the queen, leaving the control of the suit to pone's jack.
3. That the ace came from a long suit which lacked the king, and because a ruff is feared, or because dummy has the king, a change of suit is thought desirable.
4. That the king is held, and a singleton lead is now being made because dummy does not hold the ace over the singleton.
5. That the ace was a singleton, and that the ruff is desired in its suit.

Since the pone is left to pick the correct reason out of five possibilities, your chance that the second card led will be recognized as a singleton, if the ace of another suit precedes it, is small indeed.

The lead of king, from ace, king, and others, followed by a singleton, is equally confusing. Many players would judge that it meant eldest hand held ace and jack (unless the queen showed in dummy) and desired a lead from pone to enable both honors to win tricks.

Some players are quick to detect singleton leads; others never suspect them. On that account singleton leads take third rank in the desirable list, instead of first. If the singleton is a low card, it ordinarily clearly shows that a return lead is desirable. If it is a strengthening card its meaning cannot be surely read in most cases. If its meaning is clear, and the declarer has the ace,

trumps will almost certainly be led to stop the possibility of ruffs.

Notwithstanding its drawbacks, the hope of a ruff is often all that weakness has, and should be sought in such cases by an opening lead of a singleton, regardless of its denomination. A doubleton headed by a strengthening card is all right to open from weakness, as a forlorn hope that the third round may come before trumps are led, but only lead from a low doubleton as a last resort. The mischief you may cause by fooling your partner will average to outweigh your rare gains.

Strengthening leads from sequences like Q-J-10 or J-10-9 are not only apt to be useful to partner, but often result in winning later tricks with your own cards. It often happens that two higher cards, and occasionally three higher honors, fall on your lead of a low honor.

An established long suit cannot be run out until the declarer's trumps have been exhausted. An attempt to do so usually results in the declarer ruffing from one hand and discarding from the other, consequently a second suit soon falls short, and is ruffed when your side attempts to lead it. Ruffing from the weak hand and discarding from the strong hand ruins plain suits in which tricks could otherwise be won.

Since a yarborough (a hand holding no card higher than the 9) averages to come to a player only once in 1,828 deals, it is indeed rare to be found with no strengthening card to lead, in case you cannot open a suit which you desire led back to you. Sticking to the rule that a low card generally desires an immediate return of a suit greatly increases your chances of a ruff

with a low singleton lead, without detracting from your chances if the singleton happens to be a card not recognizable.

If your partner has doubled, it is probable that the least desired opening lead is a trump. Because he has doubled you must subordinate your hand to his and must play his game. If he has not bid when you hold a long suit headed by an ace, the wisest thing to do is to view dummy, in order to see what your partner desires led. His trump strength may be very great either in high cards or in length of suit. He may have unusual side strength, perhaps a short established suit with which he trusts to force the declarer. He may reckon upon using numerous small trumps to ruff side suits. Lacking a winning card, lead from the suit you have bid, or if you have not bid lead your strongest suit to show him where you can help. If you cannot help, open with a strengthening lead to show that you are powerless. It will often be better to lead a trump than to fool your partner with a low lead from a strengthless suit. It is a good idea to lead the king from ace-king before you lead your highest card of your protected suit, to show how a safe lead can be returned to you. Do not lead an ace from a short suit if the king is lacking. The ace is too valuable to be risked on an opening, when it may be needed to kill a high card lying with the declarer. Reserve the ace and open with your next best suit.

When dummy has a few small trumps and a short suit, with another long one, a cross ruff may be established. Cut this off by leading trumps. Cut off even his chance to ruff, whether or not the "see-saw" threatens.

Lacking any other possible trick, the ace of a long suit can be led to prevent a slam. If the suit is short the danger of a slam does not justify such a lead.

After dummy's cards are boarded it is useless to treasure a tenace of which the intermediate card lies in dummy. If you have ace-queen and dummy shows the guarded king, you can lead the ace when convenient. The declarer will hardly be kind enough to lead the king up to your tenace.

If you hold three to the king and dummy fails to show the ace, you can lead a small card away from the king if you find that the declarer does not open the suit. It is probable that your partner has the ace, quite likely both ace and queen, so that he cannot open the suit. It is unlikely that the declarer holds both ace and queen, or he would have tried to lead up to them from dummy. In any event, your king cannot be harmed by your lead, and great good may follow. If the ace shows in dummy, or if your king is singly guarded, you should not open that suit.

It may seem that a full disclosure of your hand will be as useful to the declarer as to your partner. This is a mistake, however. The declarer knows precisely what cards are against him. It is less important to know in which hand each hostile card lies. The side players are in ignorance as to whether a hidden card is for or against them.

In disclosing to your partner that you hold a card you merely tell the declarer in which of two opposing hands it lies; but you inform your partner that it is friendly, and is in your hand. This puts him on more even terms with the declarer than he was before.

## NO-TRUMP LEADS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

As side player at no trumps usually your only chance to win is to establish a long suit. The declarer's discards must then curtail his long suit or weaken his remaining suits. The side first able to set up its long suit possesses the most powerful weapon to be found at no trumps.

The best suit to open is one headed by ace, king, and queen, either with or without others of that suit. They allow a safe look at dummy, with two certain tricks left in the suit.

There are eight general varieties of openings at no trumps:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| No. 1 Solid Suits.   | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{A-K-Q-J-10} \\ \text{A-K-Q-J} \\ \text{A-K-Q} \end{array} \right.$              | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Each card is a sure trick.} \\ \text{The view of dummy and} \\ \text{the fall of the cards guide} \\ \text{you to a second opening.} \end{array} \right.$ |
| No. 2 Probably established suits.                              | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{A-K-X-X-X-X-X} \\ \text{A-K-Q-X-X-X} \\ \text{A-K-Q-J-X} \end{array} \right.$   | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Each card is a probable} \\ \text{winner and an opportunity} \\ \text{is afforded to study} \\ \text{for a second opening.} \end{array} \right.$          |
| No. 3 Suits probably establishable without poney's assistance. | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{A-X-X-X-X-X-X} \\ \text{K-Q-J-X-X-X} \\ \text{A-K-X-X-X-X} \end{array} \right.$ | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{If holding in addition a} \\ \text{card of re-entry.} \end{array} \right.$  |

No. 4	Suits with 3 honors; long suits with 2 honors in sequence.	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-J-10-X-X \\ A-K-J-X \\ A-K-X-X-X-X \end{array} \right.$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{With or without re-entry several tricks may be won either through partner's ability to help or because the declarer is long in the suit and must finally lead it.} \end{array} \right\}$
No. 5	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-Q-X-X-X-X \text{ without re-entry} \\ K-Q-J-X \text{ without re-entry} \\ Q-X-X-X-X-X \text{ with another ace} \end{array} \right.$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Needing partner to win one trick and lead back the suit.} \end{array} \right\}$	
No. 6	Suits having no re-entry.	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-10-X-X-X \\ K-X-X-X-X-X \\ Q-J-X-X-X-X \end{array} \right.$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Requiring active co-operation of partner to establish.} \end{array} \right\}$
No. 7	Long suits.	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 9-X-X-X-X \\ 10-X-X-X \end{array} \right.$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Incapable of winning a trick except through being partner's long suit. Unlikely to be any one's long suit.} \end{array} \right\}$
No. 8	Short supporting suits.	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 10-9-8 \\ J-10 \\ 9-X-X \end{array} \right.$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Of possible assistance to partner.} \end{array} \right\}$

Q-X or J-X-X might win on a finesse; consequently, they are bad to open.

Never open a short suit containing your re-entry cards; as, A-X, K-Q-X, K-J-10.

Never open a short suit lacking supporting cards; as, 8-X, 7-X-X, unless it is in clubs, under the club convention on the pone's double.

In general, open your longest and strongest suit when your partner has neither bid nor doubled.

A suit shorter than four cards can legitimately be opened in few instances—*viz.*:

1. If it consists of A-K-Q, as already explained.
2. If pone doubles, as explained under "Conventional Plays."
3. In a hand devoid of possible re-entry, with the longest suit headed by a low card, a short supporting suit can be opened with its top card.

Suits like A-X-X-X, K-X-X-X-X, moderately long and having a top honor, are more useful to hold for re-entry than to open. Your partner may require re-entry to establish a long suit even if you do not. In the absence of other possibilities you may, of course, be forced to open such a suit.

Having two honor suits of equal length, open the weaker one first, and use the higher cards of the other for re-entry. Open a suit like Q-J-X-X, and use an A-K-X-X suit for its re-entry cards.

In selecting the proper card to lead from a given suit several items must be considered:

1. Catching opponents' unguarded high cards.
2. Retaining control of the suit.
3. Making the necessary loss of a trick as expensive as possible for the declarer.
4. Affording partner a chance to utilize any strength he may possess in the suit, and to lead it back while he still has cards in it.
5. Disclosing to partner what you hold in your suit to enable him to judge whether your suit or his own will best pay to play.

The length of your suit and whether you have or have not re-entry often influence the selection of the opening card.

Some of the leads in common use unnecessarily fail to meet some of these requisites without compensating gain in other ways.

The following table shows the card most nearly meeting the requirements in a majority of hands. These 19 regular leads and the irregular leads from short supporting suits are the most important features

of the defense against a no trumper undoubled by pone.  
The lead when partner doubles is explained elsewhere.

#### OPENING LEADS AT NO TRUMP

<i>Lead</i>		<i>Holding</i>
Ace	1	Ace and any other honor with 7 or more in the suit and re-entry. Otherwise lead as given below.
King	2	A-K-Q or more with or without re-entry.
	3	A-K-J, 4 or more in suit with re-entry or 7 without.
	4	A-K-10, 4 or more in suit with re-entry or 7 without.
	5	A-K, 7 or more with or without re-entry.
	6	K-Q-J, 4 or more with or without re-entry.
	7	K-Q-10, 4 or more with or without re-entry.
	8	K-Q, 7 or more with or without re-entry.
Queen	9	A-Q-J, 4 or more with or without re-entry.
	10	Q-J-10, 4 or more with or without re-entry.
	11	Q-J-9, 4 or more with or without re-entry.
Jack	12	A-K-J, less than 7 in suit without re-entry.
	13	A-J-10, 4 or more with or without re-entry.
	14	J-10-9, 4 or more with or without re-entry.
10	15	A-K-10, less than 7 in suit without re-entry.
	16	A-Q-10, 7 or more in suit without re-entry.
	17	K-J-10, 4 or more in suit with or without re-entry.
	18	10-9-8, 4 or more in suit with or without re-entry.
4th best card of suit	19	Any other combination such as: Single honors any number in suit with or without re-entry. A-K, less than 7 in suit with or without re-entry. A-Q, A-J, A-10, less than 7 with or any number without re-entry. K-Q, less than 7 in suit with or without re-entry. K-J, K-10, Q-10, any number with or without re-entry. A-Q-10, less than 7 in suit with or without re-entry. Long suits without an honor with or without re-entry.

The opening lead of an honor at no trumps usually shows that the suit holds 3 honors or 7 cards. In exceptional cases, however, the jack or 10 may come from a short supporting suit in a valueless hand.

An ace opening shows 7 cards in the suit with another honor and re-entry.

A king lead shows the presence of the ace or queen,

or both. With both ace and queen the suit may be of any length either with or without re-entry. If either ace or queen is lacking the minimum length is 7 cards with or without re-entry, unless jack or 10 is held.

A queen lead shows absence of the king, but presence of two other honors (or the 9). The suit may be of any length over 3 cards regardless of whether re-entry is or is not held.

A jack lead denotes absence of the queen, but usually the presence of two other honors (or the 9), and a suit of more than 3 cards regardless of re-entry.

A 10 lead denies holding the jack, except in the combination K-J-10. It usually shows the presence of two other honors, or else that it comes from the top of a sequence and a suit of over 3 cards regardless of re-entry.

### DETAILS:

Just as the lead of a low card at trumps should be reserved for cases where your opening suit contains some strength, so at no trumps the lead of a fourth best should be made, if possible, from a suit having good possibilities of winning something. Long suits of low cards are sometimes held like these: 10-9-X-X-X, or 8-7-X-X, or perhaps 10-8-X-X, or 9-7-X-X-X. Such suits offer such small hope of winning a trick that it is unwise to risk fooling some partners. With their top cards in sequence it is better to lead the highest one. When no top sequence is held you can lead the second-best card, provided your partner will under-

stand such a lead. This false carding will usually be apparent and show your partner the true condition.

Do not expect a partner to follow suit twice to winning cards of your long suit (or to follow once and win the second trick), and still be able to lead you back a third round. It can be done 63 times in 100 if you only hold 4, 54 times if you hold 5; but only 42 times when holding 6, and 32 times in 100 if you hold 7 of the suit. Where high cards are probably insufficient to clear a suit this probable inability of your partner to lead a third round necessitates in many cases a low opening lead when you hold no re-entry. Such procedure loses the first trick two-thirds of the time, but it gives the pone enough better chances to lead a second round (if he holds re-entry) to more than compensate for the times you might be fortunate enough to clear the suit, had you made high leads at first, in order to catch opponents' unguarded honors.

Out of your 138,428,433 chances to hold A-K-J-X-X-X of a given suit there are 92,285,622 chances that the queen lies adversely to 46,142,811 that the pone has it (or 2 to 1).

Any one of four reasonable methods can be employed to open this suit:

1. The king and ace can be led to catch the queen. If the queen falls or lies with pone, the jack can be led to clear the suit for the smaller cards. In addition there is the slight chance that pone will hold four if an opponent has three to the queen. This will enable pone to put you in if he holds re-entry. This method offers 48 in 100 chances of finally establishing your suit, presuming, of course, that your hand lacks re-entry.

2. The king can be led to view dummy. If the queen is caught on the first round, or if the doubly guarded queen shows in dummy, the jack must follow; the queen winning on the second round enables partner to reopen the suit if he holds three cards in it. If the singly guarded queen appears in dummy, the ace must be led. Otherwise a new suit must be opened, to try to secure a lead through the declarer. This method gives only a fraction more than 48 in 100 chances finally to establish the suit. It is more complex than No. 1, and hence is less desirable.

3. Lead the jack to force out the queen. This method results 27 in 100 times in losing a trick by an adverse singleton or doubleton queen which Nos. 1 and 2 would have saved. Nevertheless, it results in establishing your suit 17 more times in 100 than the first two methods could give, and ultimately establishes your suit 65 in 100 times. The gain is due wholly to pone's added ability to lead back the suit after a single round instead of after two or three rounds. The net gain in tricks is  $(3 \times 17) - 27 = 24$  in 100 times, or an average of one-quarter trick per hand over either of the two preceding methods. It is in reality the best method of all to pursue.

4. Lead the fourth-best card. On account of losing to the 10, 9, or smaller card which could not have won over the jack, there is a possibility of the suit being blocked oftener than under No. 3. This method gives 63 chances in 100 of finally setting up the suit, with a gain of 18 tricks in 100 times over Nos. 1 and 2. It is accordingly less desirable than No. 3. With only 5 cards in the suit instead of 6 this method possesses a slight advantage over No. 3, but scarcely enough to warrant a deviation from the rule to lead one of three honors. With but 4 cards in the suit the only disadvantage this lead has is its failure to disclose to partner the great strength you have, if the fourth-best card happens to be quite low, or if it happens to be the 9. Unless you want to vary the lead according to what your fourth-best card is, it will be found better in the long run uniformly to lead the jack in preference to your fourth-best card on 4 or 5 card suits.

The reason for devoting so much space to this case is because it well illustrates a general principle applicable to suits of 5 or 6 cards, which lack one honor of being probably established, with no card of re-entry in the other suits. More averages to be gained by leading the honor directly below the missing one to draw it out than by attempting to catch the missing honor by means of higher leads. With proper cards of re-entry more gain will accrue from high-card leads. You then add your own chances of re-entry to pone's small chances of being able to lead your suit. The final result is increased economy in tricks of about one-quarter trick per hand over No. 3, where no re-entry is held.

Some players fail to consider what is due a partner when they lead from the middle of a sequence or bottom instead of from its top. They argue that if they hold A-K-Q-J-X-X-X it does not matter which honor they lead. It is true that they will win as many tricks in this particular case, but the habit is a bad one to form. Let us suppose that your partner leads the jack instead of the king from K-Q-J-X-X-X, of which you hold the ace and another. You may have at that time a suit probably requiring the loss of a single trick to establish. You see that the jack cannot come from A-K-J or A-J-10, because you hold the ace. It appears to be from J-10-9 and others, or possibly a strengthening lead from J-10 only, provided the 10 is concealed in the declarer's hand. If your partner is known to lead the 10, and not the jack, from K-J-10, you cannot very well read it as anything else. If the 10 appears in dummy's or your own hand, it is evident

that eldest hand has false-carded; but what he really has is a mystery.

If you let the trick go by to learn what the false carding means, you block the suit. To play the ace and lead back your other card instead of leading out your own strong suit seems foolish. If the declarer has the 10, so that false carding is not detected, it seems doubly foolish. If an attempt to set up your suit instead of leading back his suit results in disaster, your partner cannot blame anything except his own folly in departing from conventional leads.

The rule to lead one of three honors is only absolute where two of them are in sequence, and the suit holding over 3 cards, A-Q-10, are the only three honors where two are not in sequence. It is a wretched suit to open because of its double tenace, and is never opened with an honor with less than seven in its suit. If re-entry is held, the ace is led from seven (just as if it were ace-queen or ace-10). Without re-entry the 10 is led to permit partner to return the suit, as he probably holds only two. Pone has 5 in 9 chances to hold either king or jack, or both. One of two honors not in sequence is led only from ace and another honor with seven in the suit and re-entry. Leads from two honors in sequence without a third are made only when one of them is the king (see leads Nos. 5 and 8), or when the jack is led as the top of a sequence. The lead of a single honor only comes with the 10 as top of a sequence. These rules are for opening no-trump leads when partner has not bid.

You can remember which honor to lead from three,

when only two of them are in sequence and a trick must be lost unless partner has a missing honor, in this way: lead the one next below the highest missing honor to force that out of the way—thus, king from K-Q-10, to force out the ace, or to catch the jack; jack from A-K-J, to force out the queen and give partner a chance to return the suit. The only exception to this simple rule is to lead the 10 from K-J-10. This is done for convenience. The jack is led from two strong combinations, A-K-J and A-J-10. The 10 is led from only one other strong combination, A-K-10, except the rare lead from seven to A-Q-10, if without re-entry. This gives fewer combinations to read from jack leads if the 10 is led from K-J-10.

Many players refuse to open a suit of less than four cards at no trumps. Even where a strengthening lead is the only reasonable thing to give they find fault if it fails to benefit them when led by a partner from a hopelessly weak hand. Fortunately, a choice between such a "sporting" lead and opening a four-card suit headed by a card smaller than a 10 occurs only once in a thousand hands.

In leading from a sequence always lead the top card, unless that is the ace; in this case lead the king. On the following round lead the lowest card in your hand sure to win a trick. This is to show the length of the sequence. From A-K-Q-J-10-8 or K-Q-J-10-8 lead the king. On the second round lead the 10. The third round lead the lowest remaining card of the sequence—in this case the jack. At no trumps your partner cannot tell whether you hold the ace or whether

the declarer is saving it to win the third round. In any event, the sequence is so long that it cannot matter to your partner. At trumps it would be evident that you held the ace, or the declarer would have won the first trick. In case the 9 fell to your king you would lead the 8 instead of the 10 for the second round, since the 8 will win as surely as the 10 after the 9 has been played. It is your partner's business to note the fall of the 9 and to interpret correctly your lead of the 8. At trumps, unless you open the suit after all trumps are exhausted from your partner's hand, the second lead of a very low card of a sequence might possibly fool him into thinking that you held only the ace, king, and the low card, and were offering him a ruff to enable you to save the ace for future use. Hence the safer way to lead from a long sequence at trumps is to go down in regular order, instead of at once showing the number in sequence.

The second no-trump lead from a suit like A-Q-J-X-X, if the king does not cover your queen lead, will be the jack, but the third lead must depend upon circumstances. If the king lies well guarded in dummy, the declarer may refuse to play it upon the queen because he believes that you are leading from the top of a sequence Q-J-10 and others, and that your partner holds the ace. In that case the deception is kept up by a second lead of the jack, which will probably be passed also. If the king still has a guard and pone and declarer have followed both times, the 10 must have been drawn, and none of the suit remain except those held by yourself and dummy. If you are without re-entry the ace must be played to save that

trick and to note from his discard what pone wants led. If you have re-entry your three remaining cards will win two tricks, and the other must be surrendered to dummy. If your re-entry card is perfectly safe, and especially if it belongs to dummy's strongest suit, your best plan is to lead out your ace, following by a small one for dummy to win. Your remaining card of the suit will then be good. If your partner shows by his discard, at the time your ace is led, that he holds a suit of real value, it depends upon the certainty of your re-entry whether you should next clear your suit or whether you should lead the pone's suit at once. If you believe that his suit will be worth two tricks more on an immediate lead than it will be worth if he has to wait, you can abandon your hope of winning another trick in your own suit. It is never good policy, however, to abandon a sure trick on a mere chance of gain. If the declarer's side seems able to run out a solid suit before you can hope to re-enter, the delay may ruin your partner's hand, but adverse suits requiring establishing will give your partner plenty of chance for re-entry, and you can clear your own suit at once.

Upon an opening lead of queen from A-Q-J-X-X, two out of three times the king will lie with pone or declarer. The ace lead is an urgent demand for pone to underplay his highest honor, to enable you to see what opposes you. The king or queen lead is a somewhat less imperative demand to do this, while the lead of a jack or 10 is still less urgent. If pone holds three to the king, he may unblock in the regulation style, followed in many places by playing his middle card on

your queen and overplaying your jack with his king. The simplest and most satisfactory play is, however, to overplay your queen with the king, to show where it lies, and to lead back his next highest card. It is useless to hold up a high card unless it is needed to catch something shown by dummy. If the declarer holds three or four to the king he will, in all probability, let you win the first trick. It is likely that you cannot tell until the second round how the cards are distributed, and the only thing to do is to lead the jack on the second round, regardless of the other cards you hold. If the king does not fall on the jack, the ace must follow, and next a small card, if you have re-entry. If you have no re-entry and dummy's hand leads you to believe that your partner may have a third card of your suit, you can stop the suit after two rounds and try to put your partner in with another suit, in order to secure a lead of your own suit through the declarer. Without re-entry, and without hope that your partner has a third card of your suit, the only remaining thing to do is to lead your ace and then abandon the suit for one which may help your partner.

Being blocked on the third round of a suit is more than twice as serious as being blocked on its second round, because your partner's chances to hold three of your suit are more than twice as good as his chances to hold four. On that account it is better to be blocked the first or second round than on the third. The declarer knows this and acts accordingly.

Holding A-Q-J, the most common divisions of the suit are as follows:

If you have a total of	The others will usually hold	After the opening lead they will hold
4	4-3-2	3-2-1
5	3-3-2	2-2-1
6	3-2-2	2-1-1
7	3-2-1	2-1-0
8	2-2-1	1-1-0

As the missing king can rarely be more than singly guarded on the second round, the jack lead will usually bring it out, but the ace lead on the second round will probably cause a loss on the third round, with all that it entails. The comparatively few times an ace will be lost through such play will be more than made up by the number of times your partner can lead you a third round, if your original suit holds 4 or 5 cards. With a suit of over five cards the chances to hold you up until the third round are small. The chances, however, that partner can lead a third round if you are held up are still smaller.

The ace-queen-jack combination is no more important than various others. The reason for entering into a discussion of several of the many problems which may arise from its opening is merely to illustrate certain points liable to come up on any combination.

1. If the first lead is lower than a missing honor to draw it out and fails to do so, the second lead should usually be made with the same object in view. Let an unavoidable block come as early as possible, to enable your partner to lead back your suit.

2. With a trick to lose and one to gain in a suit by playing its last cards, whether or not this should be

done must depend largely upon what you can hope from your partner if you refrain.

3. It may pay temporarily to abandon a long suit while your partner has a return lead, if you have no re-entry, and if the declarer can block you, to try and put your partner in so that he can lead through the declarer.

## CONVENTIONAL PLAYS

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

To offset as much as possible the declarer's advantage derived from playing two hands, the side players make use of various conventional plays, designed to utilize to the utmost their joint resources, and to mutually disclose important cards held. Aside from the conventional bids and doubles already given, and after the bidding is over, one or more cards led, played, or discarded in a conventional manner can be made to convey invaluable information, or to directly help a partner to best utilize his resources. No secret code between players is permissible. All the players are entitled to know what conventions are to be used.

The club convention requires the player on the right of one bidding no trumps to hold the ace of clubs when he doubles, so that his partner can tell what suit to lead. This ace of clubs can be part of a set-up suit of clubs, or it can be in addition to another established suit. If the bid is not changed the doubler becomes the pone, or younger, and his partner becomes the leader, elder, or eldest hand, as he is variously termed. If the pone has already bid a suit he is not required

to hold the ace of clubs, since the suit he has named will be led.

The fourth-best card is the conventional lead at undoubled no trumps when an honor cannot be led from great strength, if the leader's partner has not bid.

The number of pips on any fourth-highest card led, deducted from 11, shows the number of cards outside the leader's hand which are higher than the one led. This is known as the "rule of eleven." If a 7 is led it shows that 4 higher cards are held by the remaining players. If dummy holds 2 higher cards, and the leader's partner has 2, it proves that the declarer cannot win the trick from his own hand, and thus permits the leader's partner to save his higher cards if dummy "ducks" the 7 (plays a lower card than the 7).

The most used and most useful signal is the "echo." It is given by playing or discarding an unnecessarily high card of a suit, followed on the next opportunity by a lower card of the same suit.

It has four principal meanings, with several additional minor ones, which are distinguishable by the conditions under which it is given, according to whether a partner or declarer is playing, whether it is given at trumps or no trumps, and whether in the suit being led or coming as a discard from another suit.

The "call for a suit" is used both at trumps and no trumps, either when a partner or the declarer is leading, at any time it becomes necessary to discard from one of the three suits not led. It is a request for partner to lead a card of the suit discarded at his first opportunity. If you "discard from weakness," echo in the suit desired. If following the more up-to-date

style of discarding, you can call for a suit either by echoing with its lowest two cards or by discarding a single card higher than the 7. If you "discard from strength," the first discard made, regardless of its denomination, shows the suit you desire led. In this latter case an echo shows that you do not want a suit led either because you are very weak in the suit from which you are discarding or because you want another suit led from which you cannot spare a discard. Since the echo may call for a suit or may request that it be not led, and similarly with the discard of a single card, a player should always know how his partner discards before starting a game.

The "plain-suit echo" is used only at no trumps, to show four or more cards of the suit your partner is leading. Play your second highest card on his first lead, when not holding winning cards, your next highest card on his second lead, and so on until you have only two cards left. Your highest card is then played, and last of all your lowest card. With 10-8-5-3-2, you would play them in this order, 8-5-3-10-2. If you have only 8-5-3 they should be played 5-8-3. With only 5-3 they go thus, 3-5. The echo, followed by a still lower card thus shows more than 4 of the suit. The echo, then a higher card, shows just 4 of a suit. The first two cards in ascending order, followed by a lower card, show 3 of a suit. Only 2 of a suit gives no echo. In New York and some other places it is customary to play three cards in this manner, 3-5-8, instead of 5-8-3. Either style of play is equally good, and you should follow the one used locally.

The "third-round call" is an echo from the leader's

partner when a king is led at trumps, to request that the suit be led 3 rounds, because the partner can win the third trick either by ruffing or with the top honor not held by the leader.

The "trump-suit echo" is made in the trump suit itself to disclose to partner the fact that you hold 4 trumps or more. It is only employed when your partner has doubled and is leading trumps.

Carelessly "blocking" the run of a partner's suit constitutes one of the worst possible offenses.

"Unblocking" is effected by means of the plain-suit echo, as already explained. Nothing else is needed except in cases where you hold honors in a partner's suit. If these honors are necessary to catch a card which otherwise would win a trick for dummy, they must be retained for that purpose. On a low lead from partner honors are used to try to win the trick and to return his lead. If not needed for this purpose, honors should be "underplayed" or "overplayed" on high cards led by your partner, both to avoid blocking him and to ease his mind concerning where they lie. If your suit contains over 4 cards, a high enough card must be retained to win over the last card of the suit which your partner can play, so that you can make good your last cards of the suit. Keep track of the cards played, or else your 5-card suit may block a still longer suit held by your partner.

The "combination discard" is used both at trumps and without trumps. A card not higher than the 7 is discarded from a suit you do not want led to you. An echo in a suit, or a single card higher than the 7, shows that you desire the suit led to you.

Discarding an unnecessarily high card has long been a recognized call for a suit at Whist and Bridge. The combination discard merely sets a limit on what card shall be sufficiently high to constitute a call for a suit to be led, either at trumps or at no trumps. The limit now set includes all five honors, the supporting card 9, and the uncertain card 8. Lower cards are used in the manner customary in "weak-suit discard" to show that a suit is not wanted, while the echo can be made with cards of any denomination to call for a suit, in regulation fashion. If two discards are possible, their fall in ascending fashion, 8-9, shows the suit is not desired. Had it been wanted they would have been discarded in reverse order, 9-8.

#### DETAILS:

##### CLUB CONVENTION

Even the longest established club suit cannot always be successfully bid against another player's opening bid of 2-No Trumps. If the set-up clubs are held by elder he says nothing, but simply leads them out. If they are held by younger, particularly if he has no re-entry ace, he stands small chance of utilizing them, unless his partner opens with a club. Ordinarily, this is the least likely thing to occur, as eldest hand is probably very short-suited in clubs. The double is the only means of showing what is desired led. The double also serves the purpose of showing the assistance which a set-up suit can render if elder can overbid.

If elder thinks it more profitable to defeat the adverse call than to bid, he must open with his highest club,

unless he holds an ace-king suit. In the latter case he can lead his king to show that he also holds the ace, then he must lead his best club. After clubs are run out younger leads back his best card of the suit of which his partner holds the ace. This lead through the declarer's strength may enable the holder of the ace to win a trick or two more than he could have if he were to lead out both his ace and king originally.

If elder lacks a club he should do his best to put his partner in on some other suit. He cannot well bid on the strength of pone's clubs without a lead to them, as they would be useless side strength unless pone has re-entry. The best chance to put younger in, when lacking a club, is for elder to lead the highest card of his shortest suit.

The club convention is utilized in a somewhat different manner from the spade convention under the "old count." In the latter case the spades could not be bid, but with the "new count" a bid of 2-Clubs outranks 1-No Trump bid, and can always be made on ability to win six tricks, or even five tricks when forced to bid. Unless a partner has bid, a player would be unwarranted in doubling a bid of 1-No Trump, as fourth bidder, on less than six sure tricks. As he can legitimately bid 2-Clubs on that strength, the double would ordinarily be a mistake, which would merely serve to drive his opponents to a higher bid, which he could probably neither outbid nor defeat. On this account the club convention is not applicable to cases where less than 2-No Trump bids have been made. If the holder of the clubs sits at the right of the original bidder of no trumps, and has the ace of clubs and a

set-up suit capable of winning at least five sure tricks, but incapable of bidding 4-Clubs, he doubles.

If possible re-entry is held in another suit, it is unwise to double on only five tricks and trust partner for the other trick if the opponents' score is less than 10. Two tricks will not put them out unless you double and they win. A free double occurs when their score is 10 or more, since the fulfilled contract will put them out even if not doubled.

### RULE OF ELEVEN

R. F. Foster discovered this rule in 1881, and applied it to Whist leads. For interpreting no-trump leads at Bridge and Auction it is at times invaluable, and ordinarily of some service.

Your partner may lead the 8, for example, from K-J-9-8-5. Deducting 8 from 11, you realize that outside his hand there are only 3 cards capable of winning over his lead. Dummy shows Q-6-2, and you hold A-10-4. It is at once evident that the declarer's hand is helpless, with not over 3 small cards of the suit, and that your partner must hold at least three others, including K-J-9. Consequently, you reserve your ace and win the first trick with your 10 upon the play of the 2 from dummy. You return the lead with your ace, then lead your 4. Your partner overplays the 4 with the king, captures the queen, and has cleared his suit so that each of its remaining cards wins a trick.

If the leader's fourth-best card is below a 6, the information conveyed is small, but it always shows how

many high cards are lacking in his suit. This enables his partner to decide whether he holds a more readily establishable suit than the leader.

Many fine players contend that "number-showing" leads of high cards should only be made at no trump, when the fourth-best card is lower than the 8. They maintain that the declarer gains greater advantage from the precise information conveyed than the pone does. To avoid the 8 lead from A-Q-10-8-5-3, they lead the 5 instead of the 8. They would not, however, lead their lowest card from over four merely to avoid the 8 lead, thus they would still lead the 8 from A-Q-10-8-5.

They also hold that the lead of the 8 or 9 as a fourth-best card is apt to be mistaken for the "top-of-an-intermediate sequence lead," a custom also followed by many players. This latter lead consists of the top card of an intermediate sequence of two or more cards, provided this top card is not lower than the 8. Thus the 10 is led from A-Q-10-9-3, and the 9 is led from K-J-9-8-4.

All except a few old Whist players have abandoned the fourth-best lead against a declared trump. The question now arises whether it is best also to abandon it for the newer lead against a no trump. The old query of whether exact information is more valuable to partner or opponent is involved. A similar question arises every time you false-card or show a suit. Aside from the one question mentioned, the leads already given possess to the highest degree yet obtained the merit of making the most of cards held.

If learning the game for general use, the regulation

leads will be found most useful to know. If playing in company where special leads are favored, it is always best to follow the local custom.

When you are fighting a strong trump declaration your chances to establish a long suit, or to utilize anything but the ace and king of an established side suit, are small. The leads at trumps are quite different from no-trump leads, and a fourth-best card might readily be mistaken for the top of a low suit. It is accordingly best to lead your lowest card at trumps instead of your fourth best.

### CALL FOR A SUIT

While you can call for a suit at any time, most other uses of the echo are restricted to occasions when your partner leads. It would ruin your chances to accomplish certain ends if you foolishly informed the declarer of your desires while he was in the lead.

The echo reverses the ordinary meaning of your system of discarding. Thus a single low card from a follower of the discard from weakness means, "I do not want this suit"; but an echo reverses it by meaning, "I want this suit." The echo in general is a cry of "Partner, take notice!" and shows that something particular is desired. If given under conventional conditions, it is evident what is wanted. If given under unusual circumstances, it is intended to set your partner thinking what you would like to tell him if permitted to do so.

A discard of the 8 followed by the 2 of hearts means with the weak-suit-discard advocate, "Partner, please

lead hearts when possible." To those discarding from strength it means, "Partner, do not lead hearts to me." In this latter case it is apt to mean also, "I have no very strong suit, play your own game."

The rule of eleven and the echo are really two of the principal reasons why turned-down tricks cannot be reviewed. Partners are accordingly forced to watch each play, and to bear in mind what falls, especially their partner's cards.

An honor can be used to make the echo in calling for a suit and in the plain-suit echo; but it is irregular, and usually superfluous.

### PLAIN-SUIT ECHO

This logical play of cards at no trumps serves the double purpose of disclosing to your partner the number held and of avoiding blocking his suit. Having left until the last your highest original card and your lowest, you can win a trick at any time and still return your partner's lead.

Your echo in this case shows that the declarer can hold few of your partner's long suit, and offers your partner encouragement to continue the suit, which he might abandon if he believed the declarer's suit to be very long and yours to be very short.

### THIRD-ROUND CALL

An opening lead of a plain-suit king at trumps always means that its leader has also the next card to it—either the ace or the queen, or both. You accordingly

know that your partner has the ace if he opens with the king when you have the queen. *Vice versa*, you know that he holds the queen if you have the ace.

If you hold three cards to the ace or queen when the king is led, you know that your partner can win the first two untrumped rounds of the suit, and your echo informs him that you are able to win the third round unless trumped.

When you hold only two cards of the suit from which a king is led, if you are both able and willing to trump the third round, you echo to state that fact.

It is useless to echo if dummy's suit is shorter than your own. It is also useless if you and dummy each hold only two cards of the suit if his trumps all exceed your own in denomination. In either case dummy would win by ruffing, unless the declarer held the queen, and a trick would be lost through the echo.

If you and dummy jointly hold more than 7 cards of the suit, you should not echo, even if you hold ace or queen. If you and dummy jointly hold 8 cards of the suit, you know that your partner and the declarer have between them only five of the suit. Consequently, either your partner cannot lead a third round or else the declarer can ruff it.

The leader must disregard the echo if he and dummy originally had 9 or more of the suit, since his partner and the declarer can hold only 4 of the suit between them, and the declarer can ruff the third round over the pone. There are many cases where it is desirable to keep on leading a suit to weaken the declarer by forcing him to ruff, but these cases lie outside the province of the convention in question.

The third-round call, as outlined here, has safeguards not employed in the ordinary "call-for-a-ruff" and "down-and-out" signals, and for that reason is to be preferred to them. About 13 chances in 100 deals arise where it should be used.

At times a trump is too valuable for other purposes to spare it for ruffing. There is never any obligation upon you to ruff in such a case, and you have merely to play your cards without using the echo.

There are cases where you can call for a ruff by echoing, even if your partner has not led the king; but they are exceptional, and ordinarily merely result in having the declarer lead trumps, whereas had you refrained from showing a desire to ruff he might have held off.

### TRUMP-SUIT ECHO

This is to doubled trumps what the plain-suit echo is to no trumps, except it is rare to hold 4 trumps, with the declarer possessing enough to declare and your partner having sufficient strength to double. It can, of course, come in some such way as this, with hearts trumps:

Declarer has Hearts, A-10-8-6-4; Clubs, 8-5; Diamonds, A-K-Q; Spades, 10-9-2; eldest hand has Hearts, K-Q-J-9; Clubs, A-K-J; Diamonds, 6-4-3; Spades, A-K-Q, while you hold nothing of consequence except the remaining four small trumps.

The declarer judges his hand to be worth 5, and possibly 6 tricks. Eldest hand rates his hand as worth at least 6 tricks, and probably more. He sees a chance to win a heavy score and doubles. Your partner

opens with the king of trumps, and you echo with your lowest two trumps to show that you have 4 trumps. Some players use the "three-trump echo," but it is not best to echo when holding only three trumps, unless sure that your partner will understand that you echo from three trumps.

### CALL FOR TRUMPS

During the play of certain hands a player can see an advantage if his partner will lead trumps through the declarer's strength. An echo in a plain suit which is being led by the declarer cannot be mistaken for any other signal, and is accordingly used by a few players as a call for partner to lead trumps. This is a call not generally understood by American players, and should not be used with a strange partner.

### CALL FOR ORIGINAL SUIT

While the declarer is leading at no trumps an echo in his suit means, "Partner, lead your original suit." It sometimes happens that eldest hand is not very strong in his best suit; and if declarer wins the first trick, eldest hand may abandon that suit in hope of finding pone's best suit. If the original suit is really pone's best, this call to encourage his partner is very useful.

### UNBLOCKING

More tricks are lost by underplay than by overplay. Never hesitate to take away your partner's trick with

a card of his suit not actually needed to set it up. He is entitled to know where all the missing high cards that you hold are, aside from the danger of blocking him if you hold up too long.

Unblocking methods apply especially to no trumpers, although they can be used equally well at trumps after trumps are exhausted, or if it is desirable to "force" the declarer (make him unwillingly trump a suit by continually leading its winning cards). This latter process is a splendid way of weakening the declarer's hand, but should never be attempted when the "weak hand" (the non-declaring adversary) can ruff, while the strong hand can follow or discard.

With a shorter suit than your partner's a high card must be held up in a case like this:

Queen is led from Q-J-10 (or Q-J-9) and others, dummy shows K-7-5, you hold A-8-2. Unless dummy's king is played on the first or second round the ace must be retained to catch the king, although doing so will block the suit. It is better to have you block the suit and win the trick than to have dummy block it and win both the trick and the lead.

In a case like the following, however, you should not hold up a high card, since dummy can outwait you: Dummy shows Q-6-3, you hold K-7. Whether ace or fourth-best card is led, you must put on your king. If you hold off, your partner may abandon the suit, particularly if the declarer should win the first trick. In any event, holding back your king will block the suit. The queen will probably be withheld until the third round and block it again. Moreover, if a fourth-best card is led, failure to put on your king may enable the

declarer to win the first trick with a low card, perhaps a singleton. Possibly the declarer holds both a low card capable of winning over the fourth-best lead and the ace; in this case he can win three tricks in your partner's suit if you fail to put up your king. If you hold ace and another, instead of above cards, the ace must go up the first time.

Holding either ace or king, with one or two others, with three to the queen in dummy, on a jack lead do not overplay if the queen is held back. It is better for you to block the suit than to have it done by the declarer. If you block your partner's suit you will try to find his re-entry; but the declarer will try to avoid it. The jack may be from A-J-10 with others, or from a suit headed by J-10-9. In the first case your holding back the king will result in your winning every trick in the suit. In the second case, the declarer will either be forced to put up his ace or to lose the trick.

If the hands are reversed, and you hold three to the queen, while dummy has a short suit headed by the ace or king, play your second-best card on the jack lead, and your queen, in regulation fashion, on your partner's second lead of the suit, even if dummy's ace or king goes on. This is to avoid blocking the suit, and to show where the queen lies. The only reason for refusing to play it the first time is the possibility that your partner, having no long suit of the slightest value, has done his best by giving you a supporting lead from a short suit. In this case playing your queen on the first round would merely aid the declarer in establishing the suit.

With 5 or 6 cards of a suit, you probably have a longer suit than your partner; unless your partner leads a very low card you cannot be certain of this until the declarer is forced to make his first discard, or unless dummy's suit is long enough to prove that the leader cannot hold over four of the suit.

In such a case, if your partner leads winning cards, do not interfere with him. He is clearing the suit for you. If a card led is not certain to win the trick you must overplay, if certainly able to win it. When you can outplay all your partner's remaining cards take the lead away from him. If you hold the winning card you had better take away his lead on the second round, or he may believe the declarer is waiting to win the third round.

With your partner holding A-K-Q-J-7, when you have 10-8-6-4-3-2, your regular play of 8-6-4-3 will cause your 10 to win over his 7 on the fifth round. If, however, he held A-K-Q-7, you would have to be on the watch to play your 10 on the fourth round, instead of your 3, or your suit would be blocked.

## THE DISCARD

The most disputed question in Bridge was doubtless as to what constituted the best system of discarding, the one combining to the greatest degree protection to the hand, information to partner, and simplicity.

Arguments often arose as to the relative chances of loss by discarding from long or from short suits. If discards are to be made from a suit of given length, regardless of what it contains, a 3-card suit will suffer

more severely than either longer or shorter suits. Two-card suits and 4-card suits are next worst, and suffer about equally. Next come 1-card suits and 5-card suits, which also suffer about equally from discards. Six-card suits suffer less damage than any previously mentioned; 7-card suits still less, and so on.

As a matter of fact, discards are not made wholly upon the length of the suit. Each player combines with his style of discard his personal judgment of the hand in question. Considerable experience is required to tell even approximately what can best be spared from some hands. It is folly to hoard up all the cards of a long suit without re-entry cards if your partner cannot put you in. Late in the hand some one will probably be forced to lead the suit, but in the meantime all chance to stop another suit, or to help your partner establish his long suit may have been wasted by discards from your weak suits. On the other hand, if the chances to play out a long suit are promising, discards had better be risked elsewhere. With ace and queen of a suit, wherein you hold the "doubleton" king, showing in dummy on your right, and the declarer leading a long suit, it may be necessary to "blank" your king to save guards to another suit. If the ace of a suit of which you hold the king lies at your left, with Q-J-10 at your right, you cannot well spare even one of several guards to your king. In general, the shorter a suit is with less than 3 cards, or the longer it is with over 3 cards, the safer it is for discards to be made from it.

The chief flaw in the weak-suit discard is inability to call for a suit with a single card of moderate de-

nomination. The principal failing of the discard from strength is that two cards are necessary to show that a suit is not wanted. The "seven discard" is frequently inadequate, because a suit you do not want contains no card smaller than the 7, or because a suit you want cannot spare a card higher than the 6.

The combination discard combines the best features of the weak discard, the strong discard, and the seven discard, without having as an offset any particularly bad features of its own. Two cards of any denomination call for a suit if played in reverse order, or reject a suit if played in normal order. The six lowest cards discarded singly reject a suit, the seven highest cards discarded singly call for a suit.

The first discard made is usually the most important to note. Late discards should not be considered, unless made very emphatic by an echo, or by the unnecessary discard of an honor, since it often happens that late in a hand cards of moderate size must be discarded from a suit not desired, to protect another suit from attack.

If you note that your partner does not discard from a particular suit you should try to guard the one from which he is discarding, and discard from the one he appears to be guarding.

Always remember that a discard from great strength means only the loss of a single trick; but unguarding a weak suit, or failure to save one or two cards of your partner's strong suit, may mean the loss of several tricks.

## ELDEST HAND

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

Elders hand, or elder, is the player on declarer's left, the first player to lead a card after the bidding is closed. He is called to play to the second trick as:

1. Leader, or first hand, if he wins the first trick.
2. Second hand, if the declarer wins the first trick.
3. Third hand, if the pone wins the first trick.
4. Fourth hand, if dummy wins the first trick.

Elder's proper card of a given suit to play often differs with the position in which he is to play. As briefly as possible his duty in the four possible positions is: First hand, to use conventional leads if partner has not bid, and to lead the highest of his partner's suit if he has bid; second hand, play low; third hand, play high; fourth hand, win if possible. Exceptions to these general rules will be noted later.

### FIRST-HAND PLAY

After the opening lead eldest hand should continue to lead winning cards if he has them, in most cases; but

it is folly to go on with a losing suit unless for a special purpose.

At trumps you can lead through dummy's strength, try to give partner a ruff, attempt to establish a cross-ruff, force the strong hand, or lead a small trump to prevent dummy from using a weak trump or two in ruffing a short suit.

At no trumps your original suit had better be continued, unless your partner has refused to lead it back and you desire to substitute his suit, or unless you find too great adverse strength, even if pone returns your lead.

Should dummy have a nearly established suit at no trumps, with an ace and small card for his only re-entry, while you hold the king and others of his re-entry suit, lead out your king, to prevent anything except the ace winning. If dummy passes the king lead out your small card to complete your removal of the re-entry ace.

## SECOND-HAND PLAY

The following rules are helpful to both eldest hand and pone at second-hand play. The former can use more discretion than the latter in their application, because the cards coming next after the pone are concealed.

1. Holding a fourchette over a card led never play lower than its upper card. (Thus, play the 7 on the 6 led if you hold the 5 also.)

2. Cover an honor led, even if the dummy can outplay it, unless a special reason exists for ducking—such as possessing the lowest cards of a long suit headed by a single honor.

3. It is generally best to cover a card led in sequence to those in a strong dummy. It may enable your partner to win a later trick.

4. It is useless to cover in above case if dummy is so strong that no hope exists for your partner to win a trick in the suit. (Your only chance lies in the declarer running out of the suit, so that dummy will finally be forced to lead a losing card up to you. Thus under No. 3 it is best to cover the declarer's 10 with the queen from three, when dummy shows A-K-J-X, because four to the 9 in partner's hand can win a trick. Under No. 3 it is useless to cover the declarer's 10 with queen from four, when dummy shows A-K-J-X-X-X. It is impossible for either pone or declarer to hold over two of the suit with eleven cards in sight. It is possible that the declarer is leading a singleton, and, failing to drop the queen from your hand, he may overplay his 10 and make your queen good for the third or fourth round, depending upon whether he overplays with his jack or king on the first round.)

5. Hold command of the opponent's long suit at no trumps as long as possible, to run their short hand out of leads.

6. Do not cover a clearing-card lead with a winning card unless holding back may cause you to lose it later. (On a queen led up to dummy's J-10-9-X-X with the ace unplayed do not cover with the king from three or four. Your partner may have the ace. If the declarer has the ace he cannot catch your king, and by holding back you can probably prevent him from establishing the suit.)

7. Holding 2 honors in sequence and a low card, "split honors" on a low lead by covering with the lower honor.

8. Save honors barely guarded, like K-X, Q-X-X, J-X-X-X, at the first opportunity. Hold back well-guarded honors to give your partner a chance to win with a less-favored card.

9. Play low on a low lead, unless you can split honors or cover with a card from a fourchette, or can save a badly-guarded honor.

10. Play the smallest of a long series of low cards which

fail to hold a fourchette over a low lead. The higher cards may later win a trick.

11. Win a trick cheaply to save your partner from playing a higher card.

12. Do not hesitate to sacrifice a high card to force one still higher out of dummy, if doing so will enable either you or your partner to win a later trick.

Always know what you are going to do and play quickly, but avoid the appearance of unnatural haste. Both hesitation and ostentatious assurance in playing cause the declarer to ponder the probable cause.

### THIRD-HAND PLAY

As the only cards to be played after eldest hand are exposed, third-hand play for eldest hand is very simple.

The general rule to be followed at trumps or at no trumps is to win with the lowest possible card. If unable to win, take care not to let dummy win too cheaply.

The same rules for echoing and unblocking govern both eldest hand and pone.

### FOURTH-HAND PLAY

The last play to a trick is usually to win it as cheaply as possible. As already explained, occasions arise where a trick should not be won at no trumps, but they very rarely occur at trumps.

Suppose at no trumps that dummy holds originally J-10-9-X-X-X clubs, and only a single outside card of re-entry. The declarer has the ace and queen

only. You hold three to the king. Pone has a single club. The declarer leads the ace, followed by the queen. If you play the king on his queen he will use dummy's card of re-entry to win 5 club tricks. By holding back the king dummy's hand becomes worth only a single trick with the card of re-entry, instead of being worth six tricks.

### DETAILS:

#### FIRST-HAND PLAY

Dummy's cards, and those already fallen, are additional guides to the best play for eldest hand after the first lead. These may decide him to continue with his original suit, or to open another one. At trumps he must especially avoid permitting the weak hand to ruff. Either at trumps or at no trumps great care must be used not to play off winning cards, and thus leave the rest of the suit set up for the declarer's future use. At no trumps it is particularly bad to open new suits for the declarer, and assist him in their establishment by letting go cards which otherwise would block his play. Your partner may have some use for re-entry even if you have not. At no trumps, especially, discontinue leading a suit only when it is evidently contrary to your interests to continue, either because of too great adverse strength or because another much better suit is disclosed.

Your partner may fail to return your suit for three reasons: because he has none, because dummy displays too great strength in the suit, or because pone

believes his suit to be better than yours, since more tricks are to be had from it, or because of its easier establishment.

You cannot expect further assistance on your suit if pone has opened one of his own. The first thing to attempt is to discover why your partner opened the new suit. The answer must lie either in dummy's or pone's cards. If the exposed cards of your suit are not especially strong, the change of suit comes because pone's cards demand it, and his lead should show as clearly as possible whether it is because he holds great strength in the suit he opens or because he holds none of your suit. In the latter case he is probably leading up to dummy's greatest weakness, trusting to luck to gain re-entry for you. If it is apparent that the pone is merely doing his best to assist, you can go on with your own suit. When it is clear that he has a better suit than yours the change of plan must be made on your return lead. If the case is doubtful, you had better abandon your suit, if it is at all weak, to see what his suit can offer. With a case like the following you should resume your own suit at your first chance. Eldest hand leads the 4th best from A-J-9-8-5-3, dummy plays low from K-6, pone overplays with the 10, and declarer wins with the queen. The declarer opens a suit of which dummy has ace-queen, and loses on the finesse to pone's king. Your partner opens the only suit of which you hold an outside ace, and puts you in. As you have five straight tricks in your own suit, it is your duty to resume it. Later on you can lead your partner's suit.

Had the declarer won the first trick with the 10

and left dummy over you with K-Q-7, the case would be very different; with your sole re-entry gone your best plan might be to play the ace of your original suit, and to abandon the rest of it for pone's suit.

Before making a change of suit it is ordinarily best to win a sure trick in your first suit if it is unlikely to be opened again; but it is unwise to do this if you have no lower stop, because that leaves the suit in such condition that the declarer can make an easy trick or two. If your original suit is quite apt to be reopened by the declarer, a desirable change of suit should be made before playing your winning card from the original suit, since it affords you re-entry for future use.

In case your opening lead has been lost your partner may have called for a suit in his discards to the declarer's leads. If you happen to re-enter before your partner does, it is often quite difficult to know whether to continue your own suit, or to lead the one requested by pone. His call may merely show a desire for a lead through dummy, because the latter overtops all pone's honors, or it may indicate ability to win a single trick, or it may possibly show a solid suit. If your own suit requires the active co-operation of your partner to be valuable, it is best to answer the call at once, unless you can see that the declarer must lead pone's suit later, and that pone cannot have any great strength in it. Nothing less than a surety on your own suit warrants disregarding a possible call from a solid suit. The ace is the best discard to show such a condition, and must never be disregarded beyond the time necessary to lead out your own winning cards in other suits.

While your partner's discards can be made most significant, those of the declarer are apt to be purposely misleading.

A return of your no-trump lead by pone merely means that he lays no claim to having a better suit of his own, beyond that it is quite non-committal. All his plays must be studied to determine what he desires for his share in the game. A return of your lead at trumps with a low card, instead of a lead to some great weakness in dummy, probably shows ability to ruff the third round of your suit. His lead of a new suit up to pronounced strength in dummy should show a singleton at trumps. If dummy's suit is very long it may possibly be done in the belief that you can ruff.

The usual rule, when having nothing very particular from which to lead, and being in ignorance of the pone's desires, is to lead through dummy's strength in plain suits.

At no trumps the declarer presumably has strength in at least three suits, or abnormal strength in one and something in one or two more. A lead through dummy's unbid strength is consequently less apt to be of advantage to the pone than a lead through a very weak suit of dummy's. In the first instance the declarer probably possesses the missing strength, while in the latter case it is usually divided between declarer and pone.

Pone's failure to return your lead with a card higher than dummy holds of a low suit should mean that the declarer has all the missing strength. An original lead of pone up to K-J-X in dummy, with much weaker suits also there, is apt to be made hoping that you

hold the ace and can then return the lead through to pone's queen.

Ordinarily, the best card to lead through strength is the top of a sequence or the highest from small cards.

## SECOND-HAND PLAY

Many consider that the correct "second" play of eldest hand is the most puzzling of all. In some instances it is little better than a guess to know whether to sacrifice a high card in the hope of aiding a partner's unknown hand or whether to take a long chance that it may win later if held back. The detection of what the declarer is attempting when he opens a suit often shows what you should play to most hamper him. He may desire to clear a suit; merely to put the lead in dummy's hand in order to open up another suit, and have the lead come up to his own tenace; to deprive your side of a re-entry card, or to make re-entry for dummy; to pull out your trumps; to gain a ruff from dummy's weak hand; to start a cross-ruff; to lead up to dummy's strength on one suit, and back to his own on another suit. Always try to discover just what he is attempting to do, as it will sometimes enable you to defeat his purpose by departing from a general rule.

Low-card leads toward low cards are always objects of suspicion. At trumps they probably mean a singleton with the declarer. At either trumps or no trumps they may be led hoping that you will win and lead your opening suit up to the declarer. If you could be embarrassed by such a lead, either you can win and lead another suit through dummy's strength or you

can duck and trust your partner to lead your suit through the declarer.

The mathematical chances that missing cards lie one or more with your partner are:

1 card missing, even chances				
2 cards	"	3 in 4	"	
3	"	"	7 " 8	"

As the declarer has deliberately chosen the trump, instead of having it come by chance, usually he has picked a time when he holds more than the average of its strength. On that account it would be foolish to calculate that if neither you nor dummy held either the ace or the king of trumps, your partner had 3 in 4 chances to hold one or both of them.

In certain cases where the declarer has made a high shut-cut bid, thus preventing your partner from bidding, it is perfectly right, however, to believe that pone has a full 3 in 4 chances to hold one or both of two missing plain-suit aces, and equal chances that he has the missing ace of a plain suit which you contemplate leading. At no trumps be wary of probabilities as to the nature of high-card distribution, since a wise declarer has chosen a time favorable to his own hand. Probabilities are extremely useful, but only when utilized with perfect understanding of what they mean and when they can be taken at face value.

The following are examples of constantly recurring cases where individual thought is needed to make the best play of eldest hand's cards on leads by the declarer.

Suppose that the declarer leads the jack up to

dummy's ace-queen-7-4 when you hold king-9-8-5. You can see 9 cards. It is possible that your partner holds 4 cards to the 10; but if the declarer has another card of the suit to lead it is certain that the pone cannot stop the suit unless you force out the ace. Even if the declarer has all the remaining cards of the suit, your 9 must eventually win a trick if you cover with the king and force the ace; consequently, you should do so. This comes under Rule 3 (Second-Hand Play) in a general way, but belongs more especially to Rule 12. If dummy had shown the 10 also, you would not have covered, because the queen-10-7 would still dominate your 9-8-5, and your partner could not possibly win a trick. This would come under Rule 4.

Suppose jack is led up to a ragged suit in dummy like ace-9-6-2, and you hold queen-8-5-4. You do not know where the king-10-7-3 lie. If pone holds the king, even as a singleton, either his king or your queen is bound to win a trick. If declarer holds the king he may attempt to finesse the jack, or if you do not cover he may overplay with the ace and lead back to the king in his own hand. If he also holds the 10 and another he may then attempt a finesse of the 9. The chances are better than even that the pone holds either king or 10, and he may have the latter doubly guarded. If he does hold the latter combination the declarer has only one more card to lead, so that your queen will be safe. If declarer has only one more it is fairly certain that it cannot be the king, or he would have led it first. It is useless to play the queen, under all the possibilities. This is covered by the exception under Rule 2. It also comes under Rules 5, 6, and 8.

Under Rule 7 you would play the queen from king-queen-X if a low card were led up to ace-jack-X-X in dummy. If you were to play the king instead of the queen you would fool your partner, who would credit the declarer with holding the queen. Later on you might greatly desire entrance, but your partner, believing you did not hold command of that suit, would not lead it to you. As fooling the declarer would be useless, the queen and not the king should be played.

A player should be careful about trying to fool expert players with such copy-book strategy as the following: "Holding ace-queen-X on the declarer's lead up to dummy's king-jack-X-X, play the ace to hide the location of the queen. Here you would not want a lead from either pone or declarer through your queen up to dummy's tenace. Your partner will not lead the suit, and the declarer, being unable to place you with the queen, will probably play the king on the next round instead of finessing through you. If you ducked on the first round he would doubtless finesse the jack, then he would know that you must hold the queen and probably the ace also, so that he would lead through you at the first opportunity. This is an exceptional case, where you hope to win two tricks instead of one by a little strategy." This attempt to fool the declarer will quite likely work out if he is a novice; but an experienced player will surely credit the queen to you when you play low on his second lead. Whether you should play the ace or low on his first lead must depend upon whether or not you want to be in.

While most of the rules relate particularly to no trumps, at trumps it is sometimes better to wait before playing a high card of even a plain suit. As an example, suppose you hold ace-X when a small card is led up to dummy's king-jack. The chances are about 80 to 1 that declarer has more of the suit. If he holds the queen and you hold back the ace on the first round, nothing is lost. If the declarer does not hold the queen and you play low, he will probably attempt a finesse of the jack, and your partner will win with the queen.

Another case, even at trumps, where it is ordinarily better to hold back the ace on the first round is where any card lower than the king is led by declarer, with not less than 2 small cards in dummy. If your partner has the king he will win; if the declarer has it your ace will still be good.

As a general thing at trumps it is useless to hold back from covering an honor, especially if the dummy and yourself jointly have over 6 of a plain suit led, or if either of you will be able to ruff on the third round. There are special cases, however, where it will pay to hold back on account of what you believe partner may hold, or in the hope of later on forcing ruffs from the declarer by leading the winning cards of a plain suit. If jack (or 10) is led through your suit containing king (or queen) with one or two low cards to dummy's ace-10 (or ace-jack), you are often advised to cover, in order to force the ace and thus leave the queen (or king) good, if the pone holds it at least once guarded. As a matter of fact, if you do not cover and the dummy's ace is not used in overplay, your partner will win

even with a singleton queen (or king). If the declarer gets cold feet at the last moment and overplays with the ace, your king will be good. When you hold either the king or queen, and the other does not show in dummy and is not led, your best chance is to wait, even if you have only a doubleton.

If you hold queen-jack-X on a lead up to ace-king-10, or if you hold king-jack-X on a lead up to ace-queen-10 in dummy, it cannot harm your partner if in both cases you split by playing the higher honor to give the impression that you do not hold the jack. It will often result in dummy's leading back his winning card instead of going to the bother of again leading through you, thus leaving your jack high.

Similarly, at trumps when you have two such cards in sequence, as jack-10 or 10-9, if obliged to finally lose one of them to leads of better cards by the declarer's side, play the higher one if you see a chance to discard the lower one later on, so as to ruff that suit. This is done to make the declarer stop leading the suit under the impression that you will ruff the next time. It is useless to attempt if the declarer is going to start leading trumps, but you may hold so many that he will not try it. This false carding will fool your partner into leading the suit under the impression that you can ruff, so it should not be done unless you believe you can discard the last of that suit before your partner can lead it. Sometimes, however, it may come in handy to remember.

Probably the most troublesome thing to the majority of players is to know when to play the king, if they are led through by the declarer, with the ace-queen and

others showing in dummy, or when the queen is led and the ace shows in dummy. The best thing ordinarily to do is to follow the general rule of playing high from 2 cards and low from more than that number. General rules 2 and 4, previously given, cover the case. If your king is singly guarded and there is a chance that pone may later be able to take a trick, you had better cover the queen; but if a low card comes through, and the ace, queen, jack, and others show, it is best to hold off until the second round.

Suppose that you hold king-X-X at no trumps, a small card comes through and dummy shows ace-queen-jack-X-X but lacks the 10. Some players put on the king, because they say that if the declarer has another card to lead the king must surely fall, because the ace will be led on the third round. With nine cards in sight the pone has in 100 chances 22 to hold all four missing ones, 27 to hold three, 27 to hold two, 22 to hold one, and 2 that he holds none at all. Unless he holds four he cannot save the 10. There are 22 chances in 100 that the declarer has not another card to lead, and if he has you force him to use up a re-entry card to lead it if he finesses the dummy's jack. By holding back the king, if the pone has four to the 10, the only way the declarer can act is to abandon the suit or make his second lead direct from dummy, which will result in your side making both king and 10 good. At first sight it might appear that it would be useless to hold back the king, still we can see that it adds nothing to your chances to play it, and you may win an extra trick by waiting.

If the ace and small cards only appear in dummy

and the queen is led through your king, a careful analysis of what will happen with the jack and 10 variously located in the hand of declarer or pone and accompanied by varying numbers of cards shows the following general rule can be made: Cover the queen in each case except where your suit is longer than dummy's. In that case, of course, your king will be good after the ace is played.

Similarly, if you hold three or more small cards and the queen, with jack led, the king in dummy and the ace invisible, you had better cover unless you hold two more in your suit than dummy shows.

## PONE

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

#### FIRST-HAND PLAY

The pone, also called younger and youngest hand, has two advantages over his partner in leading—eldest hand's opening lead shows what to expect from him, and dummy's cards are exposed.

As pone you are under no obligations to return your partner's lead at trumps under the following conditions: if you hold winning cards in other suits; if you have high honor sequences or three honors in a different suit; if you can lead up to pronounced weakness in dummy. If your partner has bid and has then opened a different suit, it is probable that he wants a lead of his suit through the declarer. Where none of the above reasons exist for changing the suit you should return the opening suit, unless elder led a strengthening card to show weakness in the suit. In the latter case think whether he can have a tenace in another suit, or a guarded single honor, to which he wants a lead. Unless a decided advantage can come through opening a new suit, it is best to lead back a winning card of the first suit, and also is usually best to do so if you believe that your partner holds its next winning card or can ruff.

In general, return your best card of your partner's

suit. At no trumps be careful neither to return nor to discard the lowest card you hold of his suit unless he holds fewer of them than you do.

At no trumps it is often better to return your partner's lead, even up to dummy's major tenace (ace-queen), than to open a new suit in which you hold nothing. Your only excuse for opening a new suit, provided you can return your partner's lead, is a belief that the new suit can be established more easily, or contains more tricks, and can be set up in the same number of leads as your partner's suit. If you decline to return your partner's suit you must depend upon your own resources to set up your new suit.

Use regulation leads in opening a new suit, just as eldest hand would. Avoid leads to or through an opponent's hand when he holds cards in that suit which are desirable to lead from.

In leading up to dummy's weakness lead a strengthening card if it will force the declarer to play a card higher than the exposed hand shows. Thus lead the 9 from K-9-4-3 if dummy shows 8-5, in order to force a better card from the declarer. If your partner cannot beat the 8, your lead prevents dummy's cards from winning and coming back through your hand. The strengthening 9 also prevents your partner from leading back the suit in case he should win with the jack over declarer's 10, from A-Q-10.

## SECOND-HAND PLAY

The pone has little opportunity to deviate from stereotyped forms of second-hand play, because third-hand cards are always concealed.

With the exception of Rule 3, the twelve rules already given under "Second-hand Play for Eldest Hand" also apply to pone's case, by making the word "declarer" read "dummy," and vice versa. Caution has to be employed in surmises as to what the declarer holds.

On a low card always play an honor which you would have led had you been eldest hand opening that suit from strength. For example, jack from A-J-10-X, or 10 from K-J-10-X-X. In following from a sequence, like Q-J-10-X, remember that while you lead its top card (the queen) you must follow with its bottom card (the 10).

At trumps, precisely as if you were eldest hand, it is generally best to win your tricks as soon as possible before the suit can be ruffed. At no trumps hold back winning cards of opponents' suits as long as possible, both because it gives eldest hand a chance to make his high cards good and because it may result in using up opponents' valuable re-entry cards.

### THIRD-HAND PLAY

This part of the game is much more difficult for the pone than for eldest hand. The former has the declarer's strength over his cards, and the fourth-hand cards are concealed, while eldest hand plays with full information as to what dummy holds.

The general Whist rule of "third hand high" ordinarily governs the play. If your highest card is one of a sequence, like king-queen-jack, you will play the jack. If it wins you will return the king. If that wins you will lead your queen. If your jack, from

queen-jack, loses to the declarer's ace, your partner will know that you hold the queen, or the declarer would have won with the queen in preference to using the ace. Should you play the queen from queen-jack, your partner could not tell that you held the lower honor, and would credit its possession to the declarer.

If you hold queen-9-3 and dummy plays 8 from jack-10-8, you will play the 9. Your cards and dummy's are in sequence, and you play in regulation manner the lowest card of the combined sequence. The play permits you to retain the queen over dummy's jack, and still renders your holdings perfectly clear to your partner. If the declarer wins with the ace or king, it is self-evident in the first case that you hold the queen; but in the second case it might appear possible that the declarer is false-carding and holds the queen as well.

An absolute rule for third hand is, never finesse against a partner. This means that you must play your highest card on your partner's lead, except in two cases—*viz.*:

1. When partner leads a supporting card on the chance of striking your strong suit, or leads a suit in which you have indicated strength either by bid or discards. He is then merely trying to assist you. The suit is yours to play as you deem best.

2. When dummy shows a card impossible for your partner to catch. You can hold back a high card to prevent dummy from winning. This play aids your partner in the final establishment of his suit.

To play the queen from ace-queen and others, upon a low opening card led by your partner, is not proper

if dummy shows nothing. Your partner probably holds the king, and you are finessing against his hand. At trumps he might be leading a singleton. If you play the ace in such an event and return his lead, you offer him the only chance he may have to make good a small trump; but if you put up the queen the declarer will win with the king, and will probably lead trumps. Finessing against your partner's hand is one of the worst possible mistakes. Even if your finesse succeeds, it sometimes fools your partner on the location of your high card. A finesse which fails may even cause your partner to abandon a good suit because he thinks it is hopelessly against him.

At no trumps you may hold over a good card for several rounds if dummy refuses to play the honor over which you stand. At trumps it rarely pays to hold up an honor merely on account of what dummy shows, as the danger of finally losing your honor through a ruff from the declarer is too great.

#### FOURTH-HAND PLAY

The pone's play at fourth hand is similar to that of eldest hand, playing a winning card, in case the trick would otherwise be lost, unless he can gain an advantage by holding up.

#### DETAILS:

##### FIRST-HAND PLAY

Study your partner's plays. If he has led an ace at no trumps and leads scientifically, he should have

at least seven cards of that suit including another honor, also re-entry. Try to detect what the other honor is. The ace lead is an urgent call to clear the way by playing your highest card, and should be heeded, unless dummy holds something like a singly guarded queen, while you have a similarly guarded king.

If you have thrown your doubleton king upon an ace led when dummy held the singleton 10, and the second lead was won by the declarer's queen, you have no more of your partner's suit, but you know that he holds the jack, and re-entry in some other suit. The first time you win a trick it is your duty to attempt to lead eldest hand's re-entry suit in preference to fooling with one of your own. His suit is now set up and good for at least 5 tricks, probably 6 tricks. Look for suits with aces and kings unlocated. It cannot well be a suit of which you can locate both top honors outside your partner's hand.

Never attempt to show a suit by leading anything from it before trying to put your partner in the lead with a set-up suit, unless you can lead one of two remaining winning cards to show that you hold the other. If positive of the suit your partner wants, you had better lead both your winning cards to provide for the contingency of his having no more to lead back. Then lead the suit which he wants.

Pone, as well as eldest hand, must be careful not to let the weak hand ruff, and must take out dummy's re-entry before he can establish a dangerous suit. Unless positive that your partner can win your return lead at no trumps, you had better lead to remove

dummy's singleton ace of re-entry if he holds also a suit needing only one more lead to set it up. Of course, you merely waste time if the declarer still holds two cards in dummy's dangerous suit, or if you hold a stop to dummy's suit, so well guarded that the declarer will use up dummy's re-entry before he can establish the suit.

No-trump blocks frequently occur through forgetting that your partner's suit should be returned with the highest card which you hold of it, or through discarding low from his suit. The high-card return avoids blocking, it gives him a supporting lead, and shows him a missing high card. If you simply wish to save one or, better still, two cards of your partner's suit, to lead in case you secure re-entry before he does, almost invariably your discard of medium cards and saving the low cards will serve his purpose best. Not infrequently it happens that pone and eldest hand each hold four of the opening suit. If that occurs when you can lead to advantage to dummy's weakness, you can play your lowest card on the third round, and so win the fourth round with your highest card, in order to gain the opening lead for your new suit. Instead of wanting to lead up to dummy's weakness after running out your long suit as above, the desirable thing may be a lead through dummy's strength. In this latter case you must be careful to unblock, in order not to win the last trick of the long suit.

Eldest hand discontinues holding up a tenace if dummy possesses its intermediate card, but the reverse is true with pone—it is useless for him to hold up a tenace unless dummy holds its missing card. If eldest

hand has ace-queen of a suit and the king is not in the dummy, he reserves this tenace, hoping to catch the declarer's king; but if the dummy holds the king with even a single guard, it is useless to preserve the tenace, so he plays the ace whenever convenient. If pone holds ace-queen he reverses this process by playing the ace if the dummy does not show the king, but refusing to open that suit if dummy has the king.

Unless hard pushed for something possible to open, do not lead up to dummy's tenace, whether you hold the intermediate card or not. Do not open up any suit in which you hold cards over dummy, let some one else open such a suit. Lead trumps, or lead a card up to dummy's ace of another suit if he has no weakness to which you can lead.

Sometimes toward the end of a suit you may hold something like 10-8-4, while dummy holds 9-7, the other two hands are void of your suit, and both are presumably able to ruff. If the declarer would kindly lead the suit to you it would be preferable, but it is your lead and nothing desirable is apparent. If you lead the 4 of the suit named, your 10 still dominates, and the declarer, being unable to place the 8 and 10, is apt to ruff very low, so that your partner can win a cheap trick. In any event, the lead has not done any harm if your partner cannot outruff the declarer.

Either if you cannot or if you realize that it is useless to lead back your partner's suit at a time when you hold tenaces in both of the remaining plain suits, you can lead from two or three small trumps through the declarer's strength, as a sign that eldest hand can open either of the yet unplayed suits. Instead of tenaces you

may hold the king and small cards of a suit where dummy holds a tenace, and in the other suit a king and small ones with the ace unplaced. If eldest hand holds the ace to one of the plain suits, upon receipt of such a signal he should lead out his ace followed by a small card. It is possible that your signal may mean that you hold an ace of one plain suit and have no cards of the other and seek a ruff. This last use of the signal is unusual, and will cause the declarer to lead trumps, unless your partner happens to hold high cards in your void suit.

### SECOND-HAND PLAY

Aside from a desire to let one opponent run out of a suit before you win with an ace, there arise cases where you gain an additional trick if the short hand plays before you.

Take a case like this:

Dummy holds only two small cards of the suit, you come next with ace-10-9-X, the declarer has king-queen-jack-8-X-X, and your partner holds a small singleton. Dummy leads, and you cover with your lowest card, the declarer winning with the jack. Whether the lead comes through again, or whether the declarer leads directly from his own hand, you will win two tricks. Had you played the ace to the first trick the declarer would have won the remaining five tricks. It is not only the additional trick that counts, but there is also the extra re-entry card which may enable you to establish a suit.

Another reason for holding back a winning card is to see your partner's first discard, to know what to

lead to him in case you have none of his opening suit or if it appears hopeless to lead it. This is a most excellent reason, of which few players ever appear to think.

Either the declarer wants a majority of cards in a suit before he attempts to clear it or else he holds several of its honors. Remembering this will sometimes help you decide what to play when he leads from a short or from a long low suit in dummy. A lead from a singleton or doubleton in dummy would place a probable minimum on the suit held by the declarer, as 5 or 6 cards with 2 honors or 4 cards with 3 honors.

Holding king-queen-X, on a singleton jack led from dummy it is puzzling to know what to do. If the declarer dares to finesse the jack, you must win one trick if you play low, and if he puts on the ace because he has a very long suit you will win two tricks. With a small lead from dummy's doubleton it is useless to cover the first lead from king-queen-X. You are sure of a trick anyhow, and it is possible that 2 tricks may be won.

Cover even a low-card lead if you hold a fourchette over it which is lower than your best card.

In discarding on opponents' leads at no trumps always retain one card of your partner's suit, two if possible, so as to return his lead twice, except when you must unguard an honor in another suit to thus help him. Your duty lies first to your hand, and only second to his. Where only a single card can be retained a low card is more apt to meet his needs than a high one.

### THIRD-HAND PLAY

Suppose that your partner leads a low card at no trumps, dummy shows only 3 small cards of the suit, and you hold king-jack-X. Your partner self-evidently has not 3 honors in the suit, unless he holds less than 7 to ace-queen-10, or he would have led one of them, so it is practically certain that the declarer has an honor, possibly two of them, and holds less than 4 of the suit. You should play your king, which can only lose to the ace, and if you win you should lead back the jack. If instead of doing this you play the jack on the first round, you may lose to a twice-guarded queen, which could never have won a trick had you not finessed against your partner. The loss of this one trick may lose you the rubber, while saving it and having a successful contract the next hand might have won the rubber for you. If declarer holds the ace as an only honor, the king is no worse to play than the jack. With the 10 or queen it is better. If the declarer holds two honors it will make no difference, if the two are ace and queen, as you must lose two tricks whether you play jack or king. If declarer holds ace-10-X or queen-10-X it does not matter, since you and he will each win one trick. As the king can never be the poorer card to play, and in certain instances is the better card to play, a finesse of the second best cannot be justified. So it is in all similar cases where dummy shows no strength in the suit led—the pone must play his highest card at third hand on his partner's opening low card.

If the same card is led at no trumps when pone holds

king-jack-X, and an honor is in dummy, what pone should do depends upon dummy's honor and its guards. Suppose that dummy has a doubly guarded honor. If it is the queen, pone must hold his king and play the jack. As already explained, this requires the ace to beat it, and consequently momentarily is the equal of the king in power. If the held-up honor is the ace or 10, pone must play his king and return his jack. Of course, the jack will lose to the ace, but it will clear the suit, and that is what the "defenders" ought to do—clear their suit before the declarer's attacks have robbed them of their re-entry cards.

At no trumps, if a small card is led and you hold king-10-3, if dummy plays 7 from queen-8-7, you will cover with the 10. If the declarer has either a guarded jack or the ace it will be impossible to prevent his winning with one hand or the other. By holding the king you are preventing the queen winning, anyway; but by playing the king the queen must win, and if the declarer holds the ace you will lose two tricks instead of one. If dummy shows one more card to the queen than you hold to the king, you should play the king on the first round and return the 10. If dummy holds Q-X-X-X, and the lead is a card which dummy cannot beat without playing the queen, and which you need not raise, you can hold the king, the second and third round playing respectively the 10 and king, so that ultimately the queen must drop to the ace if your partner has it.

Suppose that your partner leads 8, from ace-jack-9-8-4, dummy shows queen-6-5-2, you hold king-10-7. By applying your rule of eleven you see that if the

8 is a fourth-best card the declarer has nothing to beat it, and if it is merely a strengthening lead from nothing that it will be folly to play the king, so you "duck" by playing the 7. If the 9 follows and dummy refuses to play the queen, you overplay with the 10 and return the king. You are now unable to continue the suit, but if eldest hand can re-enter later on he can win 2 more tricks in his suit. If you play the king on the first round and return the 10 the queen can finally win a trick.

Finesse boldly against strength in dummy, but never against hidden strength. Return your partner's lead unless you have a better suit. Apply the rule of eleven to leads of cards lower than a 9. Be sure you fully understand the principles of unblocking, echoing, overplay, and underplay.

A variation of one in denomination of the card led may change your style of play. Suppose that in both instances you hold ace-8-3, and that dummy has king-5-2. In the first case the 7 is led. By applying the rule of eleven you see this must mean that declarer holds one card higher than the 7, and consequently higher than your 8. It may be queen, jack, or 10. It cannot be the 9, since eldest hand would lead an honor from three. In the second case the 6 is led. This adds to the cards which the declarer may hold, the 9 and 7, and you know that he has two of that list. In both cases it is evident that a guarded queen in the declarer's hand must win, regardless of what you do, because the declarer will win the first trick if you refuse to play the ace; but the king will eventually lose to the ace. If you do play the ace the

king is bound to win a trick, but the ace may catch the unguarded queen. As the chances are greater for declarer to hold 2 or 3 of the suit in the first case than they are that he holds only one of the suit, the chances of his making two tricks if you play the ace are greater than that you will catch an unguarded queen. It is therefore better to give him one trick in his own hand and be certain that it will end there than it is to give him a certain trick in dummy and a possible one in his own hand.

In the second case the declarer holds two cards better than the one led; unless one of them is the guarded queen he cannot win a trick out of his own hand if you play the ace and return the 8. It will consequently be better to give him a certain trick with the king than to allow him to win perhaps an extra trick which you can surely prevent, unless he has the queen, by leading through his hand.

A list to cover even the commonest cases arising of when to finesse on third-hand play as pone, by reason of what dummy shows and the card led, is too complex to keep in mind. The only way is to have the general principles governing such cases clearly in mind and to apply them as the lay of the cards demands. As your partner usually leads from either a 4 or 5 card suit, you must allow that the declarer has what your hand and dummy's jointly do not show of the remaining 8 or 9 cards of the suit.

If there is but one way to win all the tricks in a suit, you must assume that those conditions exist and play accordingly. If queen-X-X appears in dummy when you hold ace-jack-X, assume that the jack will win

if finessed, then lead the ace and return the small card for partner's king to win the third trick. Do not play the ace to the first round to catch the hypothetical unguarded king. If the king is there it is probably guarded, and two tricks will be lost. Even if you catch the unguarded king you will lose just as much by the queen winning a trick as if you had allowed the king to win.

Holding only ace-queen of the suit led, if king remains in dummy, play the queen first to prevent dummy winning over it, then lead back the ace, whether the king is guarded or not. It is useless to hold a singleton ace over a doubleton king. The declarer knows that if eldest hand originally holds ace-jack-10 he will not open with a low card, but will lead the jack. Consequently, the declarer knows that you must have the ace, and are holding it up to wait for another lead through dummy, and so will again refuse to play the king. By holding on to your ace it costs your partner 3 re-entry cards to clear the suit; by leading it back you enable him to clear in 2 re-entries. Moreover, your partner may think that the declarer has the ace, and so never give you an opportunity to play it, except at your own expense of a re-entry card. If you hold only ace-queen and king does not show in dummy, always play the ace first and lead back the queen. If declarer holds the king, you may possibly catch it unguarded, but the main reason is to show your partner both ace and queen. If you play the queen and the declarer captures it with the king on the first round, eldest hand thinks that he also holds the ace, and may stop the suit. In any event, the suit will be blocked

twice, once by the declarer's king and once by your ace, thus costing two re-entry cards, whereas the other way it costs only a single re-entry card to clear it, provided your partner holds the other two honors, jack and 10.

For similar reasons, when dummy shows nothing necessitating the hold-up of an honor, play ace to first trick and lead back queen, even if you hold ace-queen-X or ace-queen-X-X.

If you hold any combination of cards, say king-jack-10-X, and dummy shows queen-X or 9-X-X or anything else which, added to your own cards, proves by the rule of eleven that the lead is not a fourth-best card, but is a strengthening lead (as 8 from 8-7-X-X, for example), the suit is your own, and you must play it according to your own requirements. This is not finessing against your partner, for he has avowed that he holds nothing.

Third-hand play for pone is less complex at trumps than at no trumps. On account of the liability of a ruff it very rarely pays to hold up a card because of what dummy may show. A card lower than your best can always be played when it is apparent from dummy's hand that it will be as efficacious as the best you hold in making declarer play high or in winning a trick. If your partner leads a very low plain card, it is presumably either a singleton or else he has one of the high honors. If dummy shows queen-X-X and does not play the queen, the declarer probably is short-suited or holds an honor. If you hold ace-jack only, the liability of his being short is very slight—he perhaps holds the guarded 10. In this case if you finesse the

jack it will win. If the lead is a singleton the ace will eventually win, and you stand a chance to make good a card which otherwise will be lost. If the jack wins, you lead back the ace, and your partner's king will later take care of dummy's queen. Leading away from a king is a bad blind opening, of course, but sometimes you are forced to do so. It is perfectly sound after dummy's cards are boarded and fail to show the ace. You will frequently find your partner forced to blindly open a suit like four to a queen. His lead of an intermediate card like a 7 or 8, instead of a very low card, is to prevent you from leading the suit back to dummy's king or ace, under the impression that a singleton has been led, in case you win the first trick.

A low-card opening lead at trumps calls for your best card, except in a very unusual case, as your partner has something in his hand to which he wants a return lead.

After trumps are exhausted the play of any suit is precisely as at no trumps.

On highest of a weak suit led your play must be governed by what you and dummy have. Your partner is now leading your suit, not his own, and you are at liberty to play in whatever manner best meets your own needs.

On a jack lead overplay with the ace unless both king and queen remain in dummy. On a queen lead overplay with ace unless king remains in dummy.

Echo at trumps on a king lead if you hold ace or queen, or if you have only two of the suit, as explained under the "Third-round Call."

At no trumps carefully follow out the instructions

given under "Unblocking," so as not to stand in your partner's way.

Aside from the obligation not to block your partner is the desirability to overplay or underplay on your partner's leads from a strong suit all high cards in his suit, which cannot in any way assist him. It is done to show him where they lie and encourage him to continue the suit. This is only done when your suit is the weaker.

On an ace lead, unless it is needed to catch a guarded card in dummy's hand, throw your king or other honor, even if not possible to block. On a king lead overplay with the ace unless the doubly guarded jack or 10 appears in dummy.

On the queen lead overplay with the ace or king unless a card shows in dummy, which self-evidently the remaining card in your partner's hand cannot catch, but which yours can take. His remaining honors on a queen lead are liable to be ace-jack, jack-10, or jack-9.

On the jack lead from ace-king-jack, overplay with your queen unless the trebly guarded 10 shows in dummy. If the jack wins the first trick, in the latter case, your partner will credit you with holding the queen, and will let you win the second trick. Even if you block him with your short suit it will be better than being blocked by dummy later on, for you will try to lead to your partner's re-entry, while the declarer will do his best to avoid doing so. Similarly, on the jack lead from ace-jack-10 throw your king or queen, unless needed to keep dummy out.

Underplaying with any useless honor on an ace or

king lead, or with the 10 on the queen lead, is less commonly observed than overplaying by even good players, but in reality this does much to smooth a partner's path.

On the lead of a high-winning card at trumps, in cases not coming under the third-round call, play as low as possible if you do not want the suit continued, as 3 from 10-8-3. If you do want the suit continued, play high, if you consistently can, so that eldest hand can see that either you can ruff or hold the next winning card, as 9 from king-9-2 when partner leads the ace.

## DECLARER

### CHIEF ESSENTIALS:

The declarer can read each bid as readily as an opponent can. Signals and discards must be noted by him, to locate strength and weakness in each suit. Unblocking, finessing, false-carding, hesitation, or unnatural readiness in playing, looks of satisfaction or of disappointment, are all indicative of what an adversary holds.

Always apply the rule of eleven to fourth-best leads at no trumps.

The rules for the guidance of eldest hand's and pone's play also apply to that of the declarer, with such modifications as his perfect knowledge of both his hands permits.

To play well as declarer you must first know how to play in the side positions, so that proper deductions can be drawn from what each adversary does.

After dummy's cards have been boarded, give a few moments' concentrated thought to the possibilities disclosed by the joint cards of your two hands. Note established and establishable suits, re-entry cards, or where re-entry must be provided. Think over the op-

posing bids. Determine which hand shall lead each strong suit and where chances to finesse exist. If playing at trumps, decide on your style of game. Shall trumps be led at once, and after that shall a suit be set up, or shall a cross-ruff be employed? Perhaps it will pay better to utilize trumps in ruffing than to use them in exhausting adversaries' hands. What tricks must be lost with each game variation in sight? What tricks can you surely win? Can you make a slam, or must you stop at game, or will it be a hard fight to win your contract?

Do not let a chattering partner hurry you by asking, "Do you want dummy to play the 3 or the queen?" This pause after dummy's cards are tabled is the one legitimate time for thought, and is so recognized by every experienced player. It is also the time for the side players to consider their own projects.

The way a declarer handles his trumps is usually a good index of his ability as a player.

Three principal courses are open to the declarer at trumps:

1. Exhaust adverse trumps and bring in a long suit.
2. Trump adversaries' long suits and use his own long suits to force the defenders.
3. Establish a cross-ruff.

It is generally wise to lead trumps, unless you have been doubled on a small contract. In the latter case it is best to do so if your trump strength equals the doubler's, provided you can lead through his strength and finesse deeply against his partner.

Holding an established suit, you should exhaust

trumps before opening the established suit, unless adverse trump strength is too great for you. In the latter case you can lead the established suit times enough to reduce adversaries' trumps to a point where you can exhaust the rest by trump leads, after which you can resume leading the established suit.

When dummy has an established suit and is able to ruff adversaries' long suits with a few low trumps, and you hold very little aside from four trump honors, with several low cards of dummy's suit, it is not improbable that if you lead trumps an adverse long trump will ruff dummy's long suit and permit your adversaries to lead their long suits unchecked. The best course may then be to lead dummy's long suit and let them ruff it, utilizing his two or three small trumps to ruff their long suits. This will reduce adverse trump strength to a point where you hold the long trump. You then lead trumps, and afterward allow dummy to continue with his long suit. The same plan may be workable if you have a few very high trump cards and a set-up suit, if dummy can ruff a long established suit of the side players.

With plenty of trumps exhaust those opposed to you before trying to set up a suit. If trumps are rather scarce, try to set up the suit before leading trumps. A force or two will reduce adverse trump strength to a point where you can handle it.

Having 4 trumps in your hand, with 3 trumps in dummy's, their denominations often determine whether or not they shall be led. Four top honors is a powerful reason for leading trumps, unless you face established suits in adversaries' hands. Trumps like K-J-10-X,

A-Q-J-X, Q-J-10-X, A-J-10-X, A-Q-10-X in one hand and three small trumps in the other hand give good grounds to consider whether some other method will not win more tricks than leading out trumps.

An excellent reason for not leading trumps occurs when the weak hand can ruff a suit of which the strong hand holds only small cards. Better still is the opportunity to ruff with the weak hand and to discard from a low suit held by the strong hand.

With abundant trumps and a strong side suit lead trumps at once, even if the weak hand can ruff something else.

The only excuse for unnecessarily ruffing from the strong hand is either a superabundance of trumps or an established cross-ruff. You can calculate upon sparing one trump for ruffing, without leaving the long trump in your adversaries' hands, if you hold 4 trumps in each hand you play, or five in one hand and two in the other, or with six in one hand and none in the other. With fewer trumps than these a force is better than a ruff.

Even if short of trumps it is usually better to ruff than to let a long suit run unchecked. Merely wait until you have made re-entry difficult because one adversary has no more of the other's long suit.

At no trumps a good general rule for the declarer is to lose tricks which must surely be lost early, while he has good guards about his suits.

If the declarer has guards in all suits he can try to establish one or more of them before he plays out an established suit. When it will be difficult to establish a suit, if he holds one already established he can lead

that one first, to benefit by his adversaries' discards. The object in being able to lead out two established suits is utterly to crush adverse strength in the remaining suits.

### DETAILS:

The expert enjoys and the novice most dreads playing the joint hands of declarer and dummy. Knowing precisely the resources and weak points on his side, he can direct his game with an assurance which is impossible for his adversaries. His offensive tactics of first and third hands do not clash, while the defensive play of second or of fourth hand is not upset by a partner misunderstanding his play.

To offset his adversaries' single advantage, of being able to lead through the strength of his exposed hand and up to its weakness, he can throw the lead from one hand to the other, so that he can lead from the weaker hand to the stronger on every suit as long as re-entry lasts.

The principal object in leading trumps is to prevent ruffs. Winning tricks over smaller trumps is a secondary matter.

If you have 4 trumps and dummy has 3, you have only 1 in 3 chances to hold a long trump. If you have only 4 trumps and dummy holds less than 3, it is quite useless to lead trumps.

Holding 8 trumps, four in each hand, 68 in 89 times you can depend upon neither adversary holding over 3 trumps.

Holding 6 trumps, 5 in one hand and 1 in the other, 5 in 8 times you will find the adversaries' trumps divided 4 in one hand and 3 in the other. With 5 trumps in one hand and none in the other you have only 1 in 3 chances to hold a long trump.

With 6 trumps in one hand and none in the other you can calculate upon having 2 long trumps 7 in 11 times.

It is good policy to draw two trumps from opponents to your one, when both of them have trumps and your partner has none. It is bad to reverse the process and waste two trumps to draw one, unless you are very strong in trumps. Rarely waste two trumps to draw the remaining winning trump. Try to force it and to make your remaining trumps separately by ruffing. If you have a good suit to lead, you can utilize the trump in one hand to ruff a weak suit; then if you have re-entry, lead the other trump to draw out the winning trump from your adversary.

It is better to make a helpful discard than to over-trump, when doing so puts a winning trump in your adversaries' hands.

When you and an adversary have an equal number of trumps left you can lead them if they are winning cards and if you have an established suit. Otherwise your best plan is to force him to ruff, so as to give you the long trump.

When left with several winning trumps or winning cards of any suit and one losing card of a plain suit, lead out all the winning cards first. Many times your adversaries will discard so that your last card will also win. I have frequently induced an adversary to throw

away his ace of a suit in which I held "the 13th card" by throwing away dummy's king of that suit as if I intended finally to lead another suit.

At trumps the leader of a king can often be scared away from leading more of your long low suit by throwing under his king your highest card, as if you could ruff it on the next round. Expert players are not very apt to be caught by such tricks, neither are players of very small experience, but similar strategy can be employed against the great majority of ordinary players with fair success.

Remember not to block the run of your trump suit, ruffing or leading high enough to avoid this. A temporary block may give an adversary a chance to ruff with a losing trump.

Almost any declarer can play a winning game at no trumps with strong cards and both hands guarded in all four suits. Even fair players are apt to miss a trick or two with such hands, however, because they appear so simple. They will use high cards in adversaries' suits which should be employed only for re-entry and to stop the run of opposing suits to win tricks early in the game. Or they will run out a moderately long suit and leave adversaries a long card or two, when they might just as well have established and run out a longer suit to force discards. These would be full of information, as well as weakening to opposing hands. Skill in playing at no trumps consists to a great extent of winning tricks with small cards of a long suit and of forcing adversaries either to unguard high cards in suits where the strength is divided or to discard from their strong suits. This preventing adversaries bring-

ing in their long suits before discards have weakened them is very important; so, also, is refusing to play a commanding card of their long suit until one of their hands can no longer lead that suit. This gives one hand against which finesses can be directed without fear that an established long suit will be led against you.

The bids assist greatly in locating adverse strength and in determining its general character.

Stops to the run of your own suit must be removed, as also must re-entry cards of adversaries, while unblocking and insuring re-entry in the weak hand must be most carefully observed. At trumps, reserving a trump in the weak hand often provides the best possible (perhaps only possible) re-entry card; so at no trumps a higher card of your established suit retained in the weak hand and a lower one in the strong hand may prove your best means of re-entry, after all opposing cards of that suit have been played. This feature is always worthy of consideration, instead of blindly playing out the very last cards of a suit.

In reviewing the joint cards of dummy and himself the declarer will ordinarily select as the suit for his no-trump attack the one containing the greatest number of cards. Of two suits equal in other respects select the one in which dummy shows the greatest strength, since the adversaries will more zealously protect their high cards in this suit than they will the one in which you hold concealed strength. In defending themselves from the attack of dummy's suit they are apt to unguard high cards in your concealed suit and thus give you a chance readily to establish it after the first suit has been exhausted.

Other things being equal, it is self-evident that a total of 8 cards divided equally between your hand and dummy's is less effective than the same cards divided 5 and 3, or 6 and 2, because 5 or 6 leads of a suit will necessitate the adversaries sacrificing more through discards than 4 leads will. Moreover, a total of 7 cards, divided 6 and 1 between your two hands, is better than 8 (containing the same honors), divided evenly, or in the ratio of 5 to 3, between dummy and declarer.

It is often better to try to establish an inferior suit than to continue with the first one tried when great strength in that suit is concentrated in the hand over you.

Second and fourth hand plays for the declarer are much simpler than for the other two players. There is no unnecessary sacrifice of two high cards on a single trick, such as frequently occurs with the defenders. Where, for example, eldest hand will play the queen from three on the 10 led by the declarer, because dummy shows nothing, and the pone wins with his singleton ace.

Playing two hands gives the declarer a chance to save a high card in his weak hand for re-entry when he can as cheaply win from his own hand. With Q-X-X in dummy and A-J-X-X in your own hand do not try to win with the queen; use either jack or ace.

Do not risk a high card at second hand, unless you are strong in the suit, if you are liable to be called upon to overplay at fourth hand. At no trumps you must play the king from two at second hand if fourth hand

has nothing; but this comes under the general heading of making a poorly guarded honor good when possible. Moreover, you are *not* "liable to be called upon to overplay at fourth hand." With J-X-X-X in dummy do not play jack on 10 led when you hold K-X-X in your own hand. If the 10 surely came from A-Q-10 it would be all right to do so, but it would be a miserable opening with less than 7 in suit, and more probably it comes from the top of a suit, so the pone probably has both ace and queen. If he plays the ace you have saved your jack and can later stop his queen. If he plays the queen you can win the trick with the king, with the comfortable feeling that unless the lead was from a short suit the pone holds only the ace, and must again block the suit if it is led.

If you can win two tricks in an adversary's suit, it is ordinarily better to win the second and third, or the first and third, rather than the first two tricks. If it is apparent that the leader's partner will have none of the suit to lead back after the second round, it will be best to win the first and second rounds, and chance that suit being led again. Unless declarer and dummy jointly hold seven you cannot be certain of that fact. If you hold A-Q-X and dummy holds less than 4 small cards, it will be wise to win the first trick with the queen from pone on a lead from your left, then to hold the ace until the third round. You cannot let the first trick go to pone (unless he wins with the king) and permit him to lead through your hand up to eldest hand's king. Even if eldest hand will win the first trick it is somewhat dangerous to let him do so if you have a weak suit, because he might change to that suit

and wait for a lead to come through your tenace. If instead of A-Q-X you should hold A-K-X, it would be best to pass the first trick, with less than 7 of the suit between you and dummy.

Holding up a commanding card of an adversary's suit until one player can no longer lead that suit gives you only one instead of two hands to fear. A general rule is that it will pay to hold up twice if it pays to hold up the first round. If an adversary holds up an ace too long the declarer may avoid leading that suit, but the declarer can usually hold up a winning card as long as he chooses. Holding up a winning card in each hand, care must be taken finally to play them in a way to bring your own lead from the desired direction.

With ace of an adversary's strong suit in one hand and king in the other, like A-X-X and K-X-X, after the first round there will remain against you only 5 of that suit. If you pass the first round and win the second and third rounds, the suit will probably never be heard from again, so that it often pays to hold up two stops to a strong suit instead of one.

Weakly guarded honors, like Q-X-X, J-X-X-X, should be allowed to make when they can.

If a change of suit is feared, to prevent right-hand adversary leading through a suit not fully protected, it sometimes pays to outplay him if you are willing that your left-hand adversary should win and lead up to your strong hand.

Make your discards as enigmatical as possible. Decide where the next attack is to come, and hide extreme weakness in a suit by discarding from a stronger one. Do not discard from the same suit in both hands

unless that suit is so strong that you can well spare the cards. When one hand has a suit well guarded, that suit can be discarded from the other hand. In this way you can ordinarily guard one suit in each hand by allowing one hand to discard from the suit the other guards. With hearts being led after your side has no more, when

	<i>Clubs</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Spades</i>
declarer has left	A-Q-X	A-K-X	X-X-X-X
and dummy has left	X-X-X	J-X-X-X	K-Q-X

the declarer can discard spades while dummy discards clubs.

With two entire suits against you, the lead must not be lost until you have won all you can. With only a single suit against you, an attempt must be made to establish your best suit. Holding a second stop to the opening suit entitles you to take chances not otherwise warranted.

A suit with an adverse ace is much better to open than one having both king and queen against you. The ace is almost certain to win sometime, but by postponing opening the last-named suit it is possible that discards may cause both king and queen to fall together, or one of them to fall to your ace.

Bad suits for the declarer to open, unless they are very long, are those having a single honor in each hand. If they are ace and king they should be saved for valuable re-entry; otherwise than ace and king the suits are too weak to open. King or queen with small

supporting cards in one hand, and jack or 10 with smaller ones in the other hand, are extremely bad suits to open.

Long suits in one hand from which ace, king, or queen would naturally be led on the blind lead, with some support in the other hand, are always admirable suits to open at no trumps. The best suit, of course, is a long, fully established suit which insures helpful discards.

Most games are won through two things: having the cards, and not missing obvious things. Only at rare intervals does a brilliant coup win a game which otherwise would be lost. Lots of games are lost, on the other hand, by undue risks taken in the attempt to pull off a smart play, and still more are lost by failure to follow the fall of the cards.

If a finesse is attempted on the first round of an unbid suit which you open, it has even chances of success; but if deferred until the second round its chances average better, because of information given by the cards played on the first round; singleton stops are also eliminated. A little plain common sense will also help to direct a finesse properly. If eldest hand has shown considerable strength in his suit and the declarer finds that a finesse must be chanced in one or two other suits, the law of averages indicates that the pone is more apt to hold the missing strength in those suits than eldest hand. Accordingly, a finesse through the pone should be tried.

Finessing is one of the most obvious methods of winning extra tricks and of bringing out missing strength. A common trait of most players is to let

small cards of a sequence slip past their top card; but few can resist covering the card immediately below the one they hold. If you have a sequence Q-J-10-9 and the player on your left holds the guarded king, he will probably let the 9 or 10 slip past him and win tricks. He may pass the jack, but unless he is a seasoned player he will be almost certain to cover the queen, regardless of the utility of such a play.

Play a high card to dislodge a high obstructing card, and play a low one if you want it to slip past a guard.

There are times to risk much on a finesse and times to prefer a certain small loss to risking a finesse at all. Always consider what you have to gain by a successful finesse, and the possible extent of your loss if the finesse fails.

If you intend leading trumps, always do so before risking a finesse in a plain suit. If a finesse goes wrong it may mean a dangerous lead from the winner, a ruff by his partner, or, perhaps, even a cross-ruff may be started.

Risk a finesse to win the game if its miscarriage cannot "set" you. As winning the game means so much more than a lower score, it is usually best to risk being set one undoubled trick if a successful finesse will win the game. If possible to win the contract by refusing all finesses, it is better to accept that than to risk two finesses, which will win the game if both are successful, but which will lose the contract if either fails.

With other things equal, direct finesses against the stronger adversary, but do not take a finesse on the side from which a disadvantageous lead can come through

you if you lose. Do not risk losing to the adversary holding a suit which you are not prepared to stop.

Where the chances seem to be even whether to finesse or to play high for the "drop" of an obstructing card some players always finesse, others always go for the drop. Let us take two examples to illustrate what is meant:

1. You and dummy jointly hold all except the king and 7 of a suit at no trumps. Dummy leads up to your ace and queen, pone plays the 7. Shall you finesse the queen on the chance that pone still holds the king, or shall you play the ace on the chance that eldest hand has it? We will assume that dummy won the first trick (the principle involved will be the same, regardless of the number of cards played), consequently pone holds 11 cards which you have not yet seen, while eldest hand holds 12 such cards. Speaking from a purely mathematical standpoint, there are accordingly 12 chances that eldest hand has the king to 11 chances that pone has it, and the correct card to play is the ace. This is also true from the tendency cards of a suit have to fall oftener in rotation to the players than to be perfectly shuffled.

2. You and dummy in this case lack only king, 7, and 3 of having a complete suit at no trumps. Here let us suppose first that pone plays the 3 on dummy's lead. It is evident that he may have no more, or he may have both other missing cards, or he may have either one of them left alone. In the latter case, from every practical and purely theoretical standpoint, the chances are precisely equal for the remaining card to be the king or the 7; in that case it is a matter of pure

luck whether the queen or the ace had better be played. As eldest hand has one more card left in his hand than pone, the chances that the former holds both missing cards are consequently slightly greater than that pone holds them both. This problem has thus become the ordinary one of taking any finesse; whether you shall play the ace or the queen must depend, as any other ordinary finesse does, upon the remainder of your hand.

Let us now suppose that pone denies having the 3 by playing the 7 on dummy's lead. It is possible that he is false-carding, but the play must be regarded as showing either that he holds the king alone or that eldest hand holds both king and 3. If eldest hand holds the 3, then the chances are exactly even whether he or pone holds the king. These chances are thus better than ordinary for a finesse; you are assured in advance (barring false carding) that it will be impossible to catch the king by playing the ace, while you stand even chances of catching the king on your next lead by finessing now. Your play is thus clearly to try the finesse.

Let us go one step further and take a case where dummy has led at no trumps with these four cards missing from your suit, K-7-3-2. Shall you finesse your queen or shall you play the ace? Evidently, from what has already been stated, if pone plays the 2 the case is one to be decided as you would any question of finesse. If he plays the 3 the same thing is true, as he may have now one or two more. If he plays the 7, however, your best chance is to take the finesse, which will surely win over the 3 and 2 which you admit

that eldest hand has, and gives you the only possible chance of catching the king by next leading the ace. Moreover, with one less card in his hand than pone which can be the king, eldest hand now stands fewer chances than pone of holding the king.

This gives a most excellent general rule for finessing when you require better than ordinary chances of success to risk it: If the second player to a trick plays the third lowest missing card of that suit (unless it is high enough to cover the card led), the finesse stands better than ordinary chances of success.

The general principles illustrated above will enable any one to determine whether a finesse in any given case stands average chances of winning, or whether the drop of an obstructing card should be expected if the high card is played. First place as many cards as possible (of every description) in the hands of pone and eldest hand. If the latter has opened with an honor or a fourth-best card, you can place most of the cards in his opening suit. If either has discarded on a lead or has trumped, you can place all the cards of that suit, and so on. Count the unplaced cards in each opposing hand. If fourth player has one more unplaced card than the second player, you have the usual odds against the success of a finesse. If fourth player has the same number of unplaced cards as second player you have better odds than usual in favor of the success of your finesse.

Without special reasons for other play, the following frequently recurring combinations should be played as given:

Holding in one hand	With these in the other hand	Lead	Unless second hand outplays the card given below play
X-X-X	A-Q-10	X	10
J-10-X	A-Q-X	J	X
X-X-X	A-Q-X	X	Q
A-X-X	Q-X-X	X	Q
K-X-X	A-J-X	X	J
X-X-X	A-J-X	X	J
10-X	A-J-X-X	10	X
A-J-X	10-X	X	10
Q-X-X	A-J-X-X	X	J

[In order to save the queen for re-entry. If that is unnecessary the queen can be led.]

A-10-X-X	K-J-X-X	{ X X	or	K A
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[Then reverse the process and lead a low card back to the other top card.]

A-X-X	Q-J-10-X	X	10
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[If re-entry is scarce. Otherwise can lead Q up to A.]

Q-J-X	A-X-X-X	Q	X
A-X-X-X	J-X-X	X	J
X-X-X	A-X-X-X-X	X	X

[Repeat this; on third round play ace, and you may hope to win 3 tricks in the suit.]

K-X-X-X	J-X-X	X	J
X-X-X	K-Q-X	X	Q
X-X-X	Q-J-10-X	X	10

Do not lead a high card to finesse it unless you hold its equal in the other hand.

Sometimes a lead of a low card must be followed by the play of a low card, even when you hold in third hand the best card, in order to provide re-entry for a suit which you cannot depend on clearing with the number of winning cards it holds. Say that dummy

has no card capable of winning a trick except in a suit of seven to the ace, wherein you hold three to the jack, with only the king, queen, and one small card against you. No matter how the cards lie, you must lose at least one trick, consequently it will be best to lead a small card and play a small card from dummy, regardless of what second hand plays. The second time you are able to lead the suit the jack must be led. If the suit clears this round, go up with the ace; otherwise the ace must be reserved for the third round. Similar tactics would be necessary with 5 cards, including an honor, out against dummy's suit of 5 or 6 cards to A-K.

Always remember to leave re-entry in the hand where the long suit lies. If necessary, extreme measures must be adopted to put it there. Take a case where dummy has an established suit which has taken your last card of that suit to set up. He holds in addition Q-X of an unopened suit of which you hold only A-K. The only thing to do is to lead your ace, try to discard your king, and trust that your adversaries will be forced to lead that suit of which they jointly hold 9 cards. Holding K-Q-X in your own hand, with J-X-X-X in dummy, or even J-X-X, by leading out the king and queen you will usually be able to force out the ace and make a re-entry card of the jack. With A-K-Q-5 in your own hand and 6-4-3-2 in dummy's, you can probably make a re-entry card of his 6 by leading out the 3 honors to clear the suit.

The rule to look out for re-entry is necessitated by the need of establishing a long suit as soon as possible, to lead out and break up opposing strength through discards, also to enable leads to be made through

strength. To provide re-entry and not to block himself the declarer must carefully count the cards of his long suit as they fall, unblocking, overtaking, and ducking as necessity may require.

Forcing, whether in the form of making an adversary ruff your long suit at trumps or in the form of making him discard from his long suit at no trumps, is an effective method of attacking a powerful adversary.

Take all possible advantage of your adversaries' mannerisms, and of their peculiarities of play, to locate cards. Some adversaries show by their hesitation in deciding what to play that they hold a certain card. While you would have no right to take the slightest advantage of disclosures made by your partner, you have every right to make use of those of adversaries, since the etiquette of the game is sternly against them.

Leading a suit which of all others you least desired will sometimes bluff an adversary and prevent his returning the suit if its strength happens to be evenly divided between the defenders.

Most players cannot resist covering a high card, consequently lead high to pull out high stops to your suit. With only 3 cards against you, including ace and king, it is possible that the lead of your queen will cause both the higher honors to fall at once, if fourth hand has only a singleton honor.

Do your thinking (if necessary, after the opening lead) when adversaries lead up to your strength. When you do not want to disclose anything you hold in a weak suit, play with your ordinary appearance of confidence. It is true that a quick movement in playing often provokes a hasty play in return, sometimes to your ad-

vantage, but such purposely deceptive actions closely approach trickery. Try to maintain the same confident air whether or not you feel so, and always play your cards in one style. Mannerisms should neither be allowed to deceive opponents nor to enlighten a partner.

With a weak hand you are more apt to make high cards good when the other side leads. The more suits they open up at no trumps the better it will be for you. If they will assist you in clearing a suit it is to your advantage. There are occasions when it is so desirable to have a special suit led by a certain player that it pays to lead out the last losing card of another suit, if you know that he holds its last winning card, in the hope that he will open up that special suit for you. This may happen when you hold only short tenace suits, and need to make both cards of a tenace good to win your contract. You will naturally have to lose the last losing card referred to anyway.

At the end of the game you may have to lead when you hold cards like 10-8 clubs and 6-3 hearts and an adversary holds 9-7-6 clubs and 10 hearts, while his partner and the dummy hold only spades and diamonds. If you lead a club you will win only 1 trick, while he will win 3; but if you lead a heart he will win only with his 10 hearts while you must win three tricks. This shows the utility of knowing just what is out against you, where it lies, and thinking carefully before you play the few last cards.

Desiring the other side to lead trumps, you can usually accomplish this by a lead from dummy's short suit, if he shows only a few small trumps, as if you intend to start ruffing.

With two winning cards of a suit in one hand and a third in the other hand, the balance of the hand will be better preserved by winning from the hand holding the two high cards, except in a case where you want both winning cards in the weak hand for re-entry purposes.

With a single winning card in each hand, win from the hand less in need of re-entry cards. If there is no choice, win from the exposed hand to lead each adversary to believe that his partner holds the high card which is concealed in your own hand.

False-carding by the declarer, if well conceived, often misleads an adversary into leading a suit desired, or prevents his playing a winning card under the impression that his partner can win a trick at fourth hand. For example of the last: You hold A-K-X of a suit, while dummy has J-X-X. If you lead the ace, and then a small one up to the jack, it may happen that eldest hand with the guarded queen will believe that poney has the king, and will permit you to steal a trick with the jack. It is senseless to false-card in cases where nothing is to be gained, particularly so to hold up a lowest card at no trumps. Habitually leading from the bottom of a sequence or playing its top card soon becomes known to all with whom you play; thus, the utility of a very useful bit of false-carding is gone. Vary the deception by sometimes leading or playing the middle card of a sequence; when nothing can possibly be gained by the deception, play the cards of a sequence as if you were a side player.

No useful purpose comes from false-carding dummy's cards, except in rare cases where they are in sequence with your own.

On a fourth-best lead the pone knows whether declarer can beat the card led; so in a case where you cannot beat it do not play low out of dummy and expect the pone to go unnecessarily high.

Every text-book tells you that on a queen lead you should win with the king, instead of false-carding with the ace. The lead cannot possibly be from K-Q and others, but it might be from A-Q-J. The leader will know that you hold the ace, but his partner cannot tell who holds it. In addition to this repeatedly cited case there are other equally good opportunities to puzzle an adversary on an honor led by his partner.

If jack is led at no trumps, it may be from A-K-J or A-J-10 or J-10. Holding ace, king, and queen in his own hand, the declarer can win with the queen instead of false-carding. This will not tell pone that the ace and king are also held, and he is liable to return the lead at the first opportunity, under the impression that eldest hand has either the ace or both ace and king. If queen lies in dummy when declarer holds both ace and king, the same impression will be given pone by winning with the queen from dummy.

If declarer holds A-K-J in his own hand when the 10 is led and overplayed by pone's queen, if he plays the king pone may think his partner is leading from seven to A-10, with re-entry, if the declarer has enough cards to deceive the pone. With a short suit he can false-card by winning with the ace instead of the king. In the latter case eldest hand is apt to believe that pone holds the king with jack in the declarer's hand; while the pone will think the lead came

from K-J-10; consequently, both adversaries will be deceived by the false card played.

At no trumps the declarer can false-card with the ace from A-K-J to win over queen played by pone on the lead of his partner's 10, to deceive the adversaries just as above. By false-carding with the ace on pone's third-hand play of the queen, with 10 and jack anywhere, he can lead eldest hand to believe that pone holds the king.

To false-card with an honor quickly and to deceive an adversary, the declarer must have all the leads fixed clearly in mind. False-carding with lower cards is useless against ordinary players, but often very deceptive to good players.

## CARD PROBABILITIES

From the ordinary pack of 52 playing-cards 635,013,559,600 hands can be dealt, no two alike. These constitute a complete series of hands. After the cards have been dealt the 39 cards outside your own hand may lie in 8,122,425,444 different ways. The mathematical probabilities of these card distributions form the basis of a scientific system of bid and play. All rules given in this work are based upon the elaborate calculations necessary to determine the bid or play most likely to prove best. In addition to the facts previously given, the following tables contain information of interest and value to players who want to avail themselves of all possible chances to improve their game.

In a complete series of hands there will be dealt in each suit 83,935,236,906 times cards giving a genuine attacking hand in that suit, and 27,289,617,676 additional times in each suit a choice will lie between equally good declarations in that suit and no trumps. Many hands also give a choice between equally good trump calls in two or more suits. In the following table hands of the latter type are listed only under the higher call, as royals will naturally be preferred to a lower call; preference given to hearts over diamonds or clubs, and to diamonds over clubs. To

avoid the use of the huge figures given above the chances to hold an attacking hand of a given type are reduced to the chances averaging to occur in 10,000 hands and in 100 hands.

<i>Chances in 10,000 to hold attacking hands.</i>		<i>Chances in 100.</i>
No trumps, only	1,458	15
No trumps, or royals	430	4
No trumps, or hearts	404	4
No trumps, or diamonds	378	4
No trumps, or clubs	353	3
(Total chances to bid no trumps 30 in 100)		
Royals	1,322	13
Hearts	1,194	12
Diamonds	1,067	11
Clubs	940	9
No attacking hand	<u>2,454</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	10,000	100

A glance at the above table shows that an opening informatory bid of 2-Spades, for example, is proper because each of the other three players holds 75 in 100 chances to bid higher. If 1-Heart is bid there are not only 43 in 100 chances that each other player can bid a higher call, but there are also 6 in 100 chances that each of the other three players has a hand calling for a bid of 2-Diamonds or 2-Clubs. As each of the other players holds 49 in 100 chances to hold an attacking hand worth a higher opening bid than 1-Heart, it follows that if all players bid their hands a bid of 1-Heart stands only about 1 in 20 legitimate chances of holding. A table of ultra-conservative or of reckless players would alter these chances materially.

The next table shows why you can consider the ace and king of a side suit as each probably worth a trick, if you hold less than six in the suit, but that only the ace is probably worth a trick if over six are held. The table takes into consideration cases where both dummy and an opponent can ruff by presuming that the dummy can either outruff the pone or else will ruff so high as to make pone's winning so expensive as to count to the declarer's credit later on.

*Chances in 100 that opponents will ruff your leads.*

<i>Number in your suit</i>	<i>1st Round</i>	<i>2d Round</i>	<i>3d Round</i>
1	$\frac{1}{2}$	—	—
2	1	9	—
3	2	14	50
4	3	22	63
5	5	32	79
6	9	45	99
7	14	60	100

The following table shows the chances in 100 that the declarer has to win from his adversaries a given number of trump tricks merely on length of suit when holding the lowest possible trump sequence—2-3-4-5-6, etc.

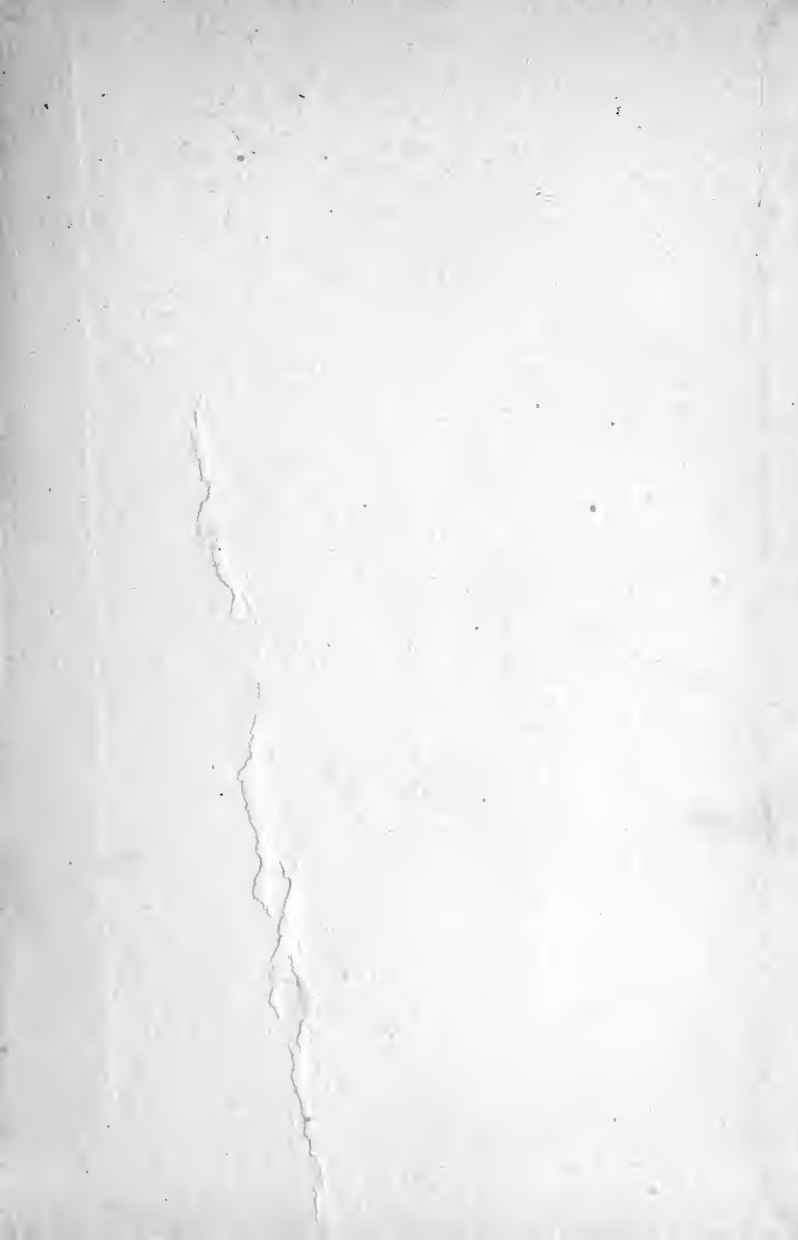
<i>Number held</i>	<i>Will win</i>	<i>Times in 100</i>
6 trumps	3 tricks	55
7 trumps	4 or more tricks	75
8 trumps	5 or more tricks	90
9 trumps	7 tricks	70

THE END





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